

A Christian Republic on the Hooghly: A contextualisation of William Carey's missionary vision

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Abstract

This thesis provides an examination of William Carey's missionary praxis on light of the influences of the late 18th century.

I begin the thesis proper with an examination of key events and writings of the late 18th. Using this I attempt to shape a worldview for the Northamptonshire Baptist Association, the small group of particular Baptists with whom William Carey was intimate. This is done through the use of N.T. Wright's language of 'story, symbol and questions'. Having shaped a worldview for this group I examine William Carey's British years, and investigate how it further developed and informed the above worldview. I conclude Part One by shaping a missionary aim for William Carey alongside a set of values. Part Two examines four endeavours within Carey's missionary enterprise and investigates the influence the above values may have had upon those endeavours. Following this examination I attempt to define Carey's praxis based on N.T. Wright's language of aim, intentions and motivations. I conclude by attempting to describe William Carey's community-building with reference to those intentions and motivations.

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Introduction

William Carey was born in Paulerspury on August 17th, 1761, to an insignificant social station.¹ His birth, family and village were all unimportant historically and the developments in his early life leave no mark on history. His move from the Church of England through Congregationalist meetinghouses and eventually to a Particular Baptist church was important in shaping both his theology and sociology but was insignificant even in his small world. Like most people born to his subaltern station his life was analogous to a piece of driftwood following the flow of a river. It is perhaps all the more remarkable that Carey, in spite of his insignificance, would eventually take an important role in shaping the flow of history. By the turn of the 19th century he was no longer insignificant and by the end of his life in 1834 he had helped to shape missional thinking for the next 200 years and influenced the decisions of governments on two continents. His significant contributions to his field have led some writers to style him the ‘father of modern mission’.² Whilst this is not true in the strict sense of his being the first missionary of modern times, it does recognise how important his *Enquiry into the Obligations upon Christians to use Means for the Propagation of the Gospel to the Heathen* (hereafter *Enquiry*) was and how influential the Particular Baptist Association for the Propagation of the Gospel to the Heathen became in shaping mission praxis. A negative aspect to this recognition has been the resulting focus on Carey’s influence on history at the expense of history’s influence on Carey. I would suggest that religion is not free from context and this thesis will attempt to re-examine Carey’s mission theology and praxis in the light of the enlightenment, where I would suggest it belongs.

Reason for Study

My own interest in this subject began when I encountered a biography of Carey during my contribution to missionary enterprise. As with most biographies of Carey it provided detailed insight into ‘what Carey did’ and ‘how he did it’ but did

¹ Eustace Carey, *Memoir of William Carey D.D.*, 5

² A number of biographies on William Carey make reference to this epithet including (Royer, Galen B. “The Father of Modern Missions.” *Wholesome Words. Worldwide Missions*. 12 Dec. 2003) (Wellman, S., *William Carey; Father of Modern Missions*, Barbour Books, 1997) (Harris, S.F., *William Carey, "The Father of Modern Missions."* Issue 970 ‘Religious Tract Society.’)

not extend itself to answer the question ‘why did he do it?’ In this respect it stopped short of historical contextualisation. This version of Carey remained an inspiring figure to me personally; however, as my knowledge of Christianity’s tension points with politics and social justice grew, only a more developed Carey could continue to offer inspiration. This thesis offers a contextualised reading of Carey as a balance to the reading I first encountered. In this I have been encouraged by A. Christopher Smith’s observation that ‘a scholarly quest for the historical Carey is long overdue’. This work is an attempt to contribute to a cutting through of the ‘layer of popular mythology’³ to uncover the real Carey.

Research Hypothesis

In light of the above, my research hypothesis can be stated as follows:

‘The most satisfactory reading of William Carey’s mission enterprise is the result of contextualisation of his development in Britain and his commitment to values developed there. However this process must be followed with an examination of his missionary praxis in light of that development.’

Throughout this thesis I will consider contextualisation of Carey to be a two-stage process. The first stage is the examination of the historical context Carey encountered in Britain. The second stage is the examination of Carey’s subsequent praxis in light of those events.

Outline

In order to demonstrate the above hypothesis, the following outline will be followed:

Part One of the thesis will begin with **Chapter One**, an examination of the significant biographies covering William Carey and the Baptist Missionary Society.⁴ It will offer a review of select material and demonstrate how this material fails to consider the importance of the late 18th century context

³ A. Christopher Smith, ‘William Carey, 1761-1834, Protestant Pioneer of the Modern Mission Era’, *Mission Legacies: Biographical Studies of Leaders of the Modern Missionary Movement*, ed. Gerald H. Anderson, Robert T. Coote, Norman A. Homer, and James M. Phillips (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1994), p. 245.

⁴ A. Christopher Smith, The Legacy of William Carey, *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*; Jan92, Vol. 16 Issue 1, 11

particularly when examining how it relates to Carey's theological and sociological development.⁵ In choosing a select number of biographies I have largely relied on A. Christopher Smith's assessment of noteworthy biographies. It will also make reference to what I have termed the 'William Carey industry', comprising of the general understanding of William Carey within Evangelical literature. This encompasses what M.A. Laird terms the 'many uncritical hagiographies, written mainly for the edification of missionary supporters'.⁶

The literature review will then examine specialist missiographies.⁷ Whilst acknowledging successful contextualisations of the British missionary enterprise it will suggest that although this has been done on a wide-scale regarding missionary enterprise in general, it has not been attempted with a focus on Carey specifically. Additionally, it will suggest that where contextualisation occurs, it often fails to consider the influence of the context on later mission praxis. The final section of this chapter will provide a literature review of key dialogue partners and also recognise important material not included.

Chapter Two will re-examine the 18th century context of Carey's ministerial years in England. The methodology used by Susan Thorne's in *Congregational Missions and the Making of an Imperial Culture in the Nineteenth Century* will be used in order to achieve this. Thorne provides detailed examination of the historical period preceding the creation of London Missionary Society.⁸ As a similar process is required here, this methodology has been useful. The process of contextualisation will begin with the key events and philosophical changes of the late 18th century including an examination of the:

⁵ Whilst several biographies offer recognition of context outside of the immediate Evangelical movement there is little recognition of how these are influenced by his historical context. In spite of these attempts the general recognition of Carey within Evangelical knowledge is limited to his conversion of individual natives.

⁶ M.A. Laird, Rev. of 'British Baptist Missionaries in India 1793-1837: The History of Serampore and its Missions', E.D. Potts, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, University of London, Vol 31, No 1, 169

⁷ The definition of the term missiographies follows Barrett & Johnson as works of 'descriptive missiology' covering but not exclusive to 'mission history, mission geography, mission education, mission literature' David Barrett and Todd M Johnson, *World Christian Trends AD30 – AD2200: Interpreting the Annual Christian Megacensus*, 452

⁸ Susan Thorne, *Congregational Missions and the Making of an Imperial Culture in the Nineteenth Century*, 26ff

- 1) **Theological developments** of the 18th century including; a) the Evangelical developments, being understood as the increased Evangelical focus on individual conversion and the theological writings associated with that process and;
b) the eschatological thought of the 18th century.
- 2) **Enlightenment philosophy**, being understood as the broad body of philosophical writings pivotal in shaping and influencing two distinct and overlapping movements; a) **Republican ideology**, being understood as the political thought developing through and alongside the enlightenment and associated with the revolutionary governments in America and France and b) **Equality**, being understood as the recognition that human beings were equal and, based on that equality, were entitled to certain freedom. This movement shaped the anti-slavery campaign.
- 3) **Educational Developments**, being understood as the increasing availability of schooling and the development of the printing press leading to greater availability of literature.

Making use of the above context I will attempt to build a mission goal for Carey based around N.T. Wright's methodology of **aims, intentions** and **motivations**.⁹ Having analysed the context of the late 18th century and demonstrated where it connected to many Dissenting groups in general and Particular Baptists specifically, I will, in **Chapter Three**, be able to construct a worldview for the Northamptonshire Baptist Association, the small group of Particular Baptists with whom Carey was connected. This analysis will make use of the language of **story, symbol** and **questions** in order to build this worldview.¹⁰

Having developed a worldview for the Northamptonshire Baptist Association, I will examine Carey's influence upon this group in **Chapter Four** and examine

⁹ Within this methodology an aim describes the overarching principle of an individual's life or life's work. An intention is defined as the specific application of the aim in a particular situation and a motivation is how that application leads a person to act on a particular occasion. N.T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, 137ff

¹⁰ N.T. Wright, *New Testament and the People of God*, 132ff

how he contributed to and developed this worldview and how it allowed him to define his missionary aims. This will be done with reference to his *Enquiry* and its context. The entirely theoretical nature of his mission praxis before departing for India makes any assessment of intentions or motivations impossible therefore the chapter, and this half of the thesis, will conclude by outlining a system of values present in Carey's life. A limiting factor has been the small body of written work authored by Carey before the beginning of his missionary enterprise. Whilst significant weight will be given to his *Enquiry*, as an expression of his thoughts and beliefs, it will be necessary to supplement this with assessments of Carey made by those close to him.

Part Two will follow Carey's developing mission praxis through his early mission enterprise from 1793 – 1799 culminating in the development of the Serampore mission station and will examine this praxis in light of the contextualisation process carried out in Part One. In order to do this I have selected 4 specific intentions of his missionary enterprise and will examine his praxis for each. These are:

- 1) Carey and Community**
- 2) Carey and *Sati***
- 3) Carey and the Caste System**
- 4) Carey and Education**

Having suggested an aim of the Christianisation and civilisation of India, I will then demonstrate the connection between Carey's intentions and the values that had previously influenced him in England.¹¹ This process is covered in the following chapters:

Chapter Five, Carey's focus on community within his mission praxis especially as it relates to the Moravian church and republican-styled utopias.

Chapter Six, Carey's anti-*Sati* campaign as it relates to the anti-slavery

¹¹ In analysing Carey's actions I will rely heavily on the archives of the Baptist Missionary Society whilst engaging with biographies and missiographies for corroborative evidence. In addition to this I will offer dialogue with prominent works relating to Carey in particular and the British missionary enterprise in general.

campaign and the egalitarian principle that influenced it.

Chapter Seven will examine the missionaries' interaction with the Caste System and how their opposition relates to republican ideology as expressed in the language of Thomas Paine.

Chapter Eight will examine his educational policies and his contribution to Indian language and explore the tension between Evangelical and enlightenment purposes.

Following this the thesis will offer conclusions about Carey's mission praxis in light of the contextualising factors, suggesting that the beliefs he brought to India may have already been a hybrid of faith and/in enlightenment. The final conclusion will attempt to shape Carey's community at Serampore in terms of the material covered.

Limitations

As the focus within this work is William Carey's motivations to praxis based on his experience in Britain it is important that too much focus does not get placed on the popular missiographical subject of indigenous reactions to the missionary enterprise. It is enough to examine what he did and why he did it without being drawn into examining what indigenous people groups thought he did and why they thought he did it.

Part One

Chapter One - Literature Review

(A brief summary of biographies on William Carey including their short-comings. A consideration of missiographies as they relate to Carey. An examination of the texts of key dialogue partners.)

William Carey's willingness to leave an increasingly comfortable situation as pastor of the Harvey Lane Baptist church in Leicester in order to struggle, at least initially, with the inhospitable Indian wilderness is in line with the literary legacy of the missionary. Brave in the face of danger, against all odds, he strides out to reach a single convert. He forsakes the world behind him, knowing nothing but Christ Crucified. He is a pioneer. There are elements of truth within this romanticised description. Carey was a pioneer. He was always mindful of what he termed 'the value of a human soul'.¹² However this oversimplified analysis of missionary activity is problematic when it emphasises these elements over additional facets. It results in a limited analysis of a highly complex character, significantly shaped by the historical situation he found himself in.

Unsurprisingly, such statements have been typical of Evangelical thought on Carey, as expressed through some biographies and many hagiographies.

The absence of focussed, consistent journals from Carey leaves us without an autobiography. He journal-ed fairly consistently between 1793-1799, after which our only first-hand insights come through personal correspondence, some of which contain journal entries within the letter content. Carey's first biographer was his nephew E. Carey, himself a part of the Serampore missionary enterprise and one of the antagonists in a schism between, on one hand, an older more experienced missionary group including Carey, Joshua Marshman and William Ward and, on the other, a younger group of missionaries. In spite of the difficult relationship between Carey and his nephew, E. Carey's biography is complimentary in its analysis of Carey's contribution. E. Carey was able to access what are now Baptist Missionary Society archival sources including letters from and to Carey.

¹² W. Carey, J. Marshman and W. Ward, *Forms of Agreement*, 1805

The resulting work offers the nearest thing possible to an autobiography. E. Carey oversees a process more as editor than author, tying in Carey's various journals and letters with his own redaction. This process leaves little space for contextualisation. In addition to this, E. Carey's biography is perhaps too close to the events to take contextualisation seriously. He began his work almost immediately after Carey's death and so assumes that much of the context is apparent. He does include letters that highlight Carey's awareness of key events but these are limited to retrospective comments on events in England. E. Carey's primary focus is on Carey's Evangelical development, particularly his association with Andrew Fuller and Robert Hall, two prominent pastors within the Northamptonshire Baptist Association.¹³ E. Carey is important in outlining the development of the Baptist Missionary Society and in examining Carey's association with Hall and Fuller and his reliance on their theological writings in his *Enquiry*. The recognition of this relationship is important because it contextualises Carey's work into the Calvinist/hyper-Calvinist debates that initially prevented discussion of/commitment to a missionary endeavour.¹⁴ Unfortunately this sequence of events remains the only significant contextualisation of Carey's time in Britain and the missionary societies origins. It also lacks detailed analysis of the *Enquiry's* substance, simply stating that it promoted the development of missionary strategy.¹⁵ E. Carey's failure to contextualise is understandable given the proximity to the events. He is delivering new information to a public intrigued by the modern missionary movement and therefore his focus is on life in India.

George Smith's *Life of William Carey, Shoemaker and Missionary* offers the first demonstration of a style of biography promoting an understanding/reading of Carey that I have termed the William Carey industry. Whilst Smith occasionally offers contextualisation, when he does his intention is to assure the reader that this context did not influence mission. When referencing the French Revolution Smith suggests, 'Carey substituted for the dreams of Rousseau the cause of

¹³ Eustace Carey, *Memoir ...*, 30-32

¹⁴ *Ibid*, 33

¹⁵ *Ibid*, 50

Christ'.¹⁶ The result of such analysis is to encourage the reader to see mission in a relative vacuum. It would not have mattered whether Carey's mission had taken place in the 18th and 19th centuries or the 1st century, or the 20th century. The reader is encouraged to examine Carey's focus on 'souls'. The reference to Rousseau assures the reader that any similarity is accidental or explainable without attributing to Carey the goals of Rousseau.

Amongst Carey's biographers S.P. Carey offers the most compelling analysis of the 18th century context as it relates to William Carey. *William Carey D.D. Fellow of the Linnaean Society* recognises the full impact of the revolutionary spirit on a minister in his 20's. He observes Carey's early association with J.C. Ryland, a non-pacifist who strongly endorsed the spirit of revolution engulfing the American continent.¹⁷ S.P. Carey suggests that this reaction demonstrates something of the spirit that enabled Carey to stand for freedom during his Serampore years. S.P. Carey's attribution of republican sentiments to J.C. Ryland is interesting because of the more generally recognised link between William Carey and J.C. Ryland.¹⁸ Ryland was a fellow Baptist pastor, a prominent member of the Northamptonshire Baptist Association and influencer in the development of the Baptist Missionary Society. Whilst S.P. Carey's demonstration of links between Carey and Richard Phillips *et al*, as regards the *Adelphi* Philosophical society, is intriguing, the connection between Ryland and Carey offers a connection between fellow Evangelicals who shared something close to a republican sentiment.¹⁹

S.P. Carey's examination of the French Revolution is particularly important. Of all biographers on Carey he leads the way in recognising the significant impact that this event had. Evidently Carey had sympathised strongly with the events in France. His actions had been those of a republican not just a sympathiser. S.P. Carey records an event in which Carey refused to drink to the health of the king

¹⁶ George Smith, *Life of William Carey*,

¹⁷ S.P. Carey, *William Carey, Fellow of the Linnaean Society*, 6

¹⁸ *Ibid*

¹⁹ *Ibid*, 63

and was rebuked by Fuller.²⁰ This event was highly demonstrative of the manner in which the *zeitgeist* had found a place within Carey's heart and mind.

S.P. Carey links these republican tendencies to the work of Jean Jacques Rousseau, one of the central figures behind the *philosophes* movement whose works provided pivotal inspiration to the events in America and France.

'Rousseau's doctrine of the people's sovereignty and of men's common and equal rights had been France's tocsin; with its hoarse English echo in Tom Paine. Like many another watchword, its implications far outwent its first intent. Rousseau never gave a thought to Christian missions; yet his message helped to raise men's conceptions of the backward and barbarian races, and to arouse, on their behalf, a brighter hope. 'The old view of the brutishness of the heathen and of their insusceptibility to conversion yielded to a Christian optimism, which regarded them in all their degradation as brother-men, who could and should be saved.' Carey's world-mission was Rousseau made practical. Convinced in every truth of "the common and equal rights of all men", he yearned to share with every man his affluent inheritance in Christ.'²¹

Mary Drewery's *William Carey* is an excellent example of detailed biography. Her ability to draw from a wide range of sources makes the work highly valuable. Whilst her contextualisation of Carey is useful, this contextualisation is not put to use during the sections of the work that cover Carey's time in India. She references his attachment to republican values in England and his probable support of the French Revolution but never questions how this affected his praxis in India. Her chapter covering the period 1828 – 1833 mentions the *Sati* campaign briefly but following it suggests that 'Carey needed such encouragement for, only three months earlier ... he had been attacked over his dearest project, bible translation'.²² The impression given to the reader is that his anti-Sati campaign was a secondary issue.

²⁰ *Ibid*, 7

²¹ *Ibid*

²² Mary Drewery, *William Carey*, 192

Drewery makes an attempt at both the opening and closing of the biography to associate Carey with biblical characters, presumably in order to demonstrate the primacy of the Evangelical imperative. Drewery closes her biography with the sentence 'can anything good come from Nazareth ... or Paulerspury'²³. Whilst this statement reflects Carey's unheralded status, it also reflects a trend of relating Carey to biblical figures whether Christ or St Paul. Whilst Drewery offers some examination of the historical contexts her considerable focus is the Evangelical developments of the 18th century.

Throughout Drewery's biography every action of Carey is associated directly to the Evangelical imperative. The lack of any analysis of the context, outside of the Evangelical one, does not allow her to develop any detailed examination of Carey's work in India. The text is inspiring on an Evangelical level, however it is indicative of Evangelical biographies on Carey which overemphasise this one dimensional approach creating a picture of a man who, once he left Britain, was influenced by nothing else.

Timothy George *Faithful Witness* devotes around half of his work to Carey's years in Britain. He makes reference to the inspiration that Carey received from James Cook's diaries.²⁴ He also recognises Carey's passionate opposition to the slave trade.²⁵ George's summary of Carey's years in Britain contains no recognition of the French Revolution²⁶ during the year 1789 although he does interestingly record²⁷ Carey's relationship with the Adelphi philosophical society, a group of scholars that included, amongst its small membership, both Robert Brewin and Richard Phillips. Whilst he recognises that each of the members opposed the slave trade he does not mention that Phillips was an 'advanced radical ... brought to trial for selling Tom Paine's *Rights of Man*'²⁸ and also responsible for publishing the radical *Leicester Herald* newspaper.²⁹ Robert Brewin was a friend of Joseph Priestley. Priestley had, through his political writings, become a

²³ *Ibid*,

²⁴ Timothy George, *Faithful Witness*, 20

²⁵ *Ibid*, 23

²⁶ *Ibid*, 24-28

²⁷ *Ibid*, 26

²⁸ Agnes Johnson, *Glimpses of Ancient Leicester: in six periods*, 316

²⁹ Siobhan Begley, *The Story of Leicester*, xciv

controversial figure by 1789.³⁰ When outlining the wider theological developments of the 18th Century, George makes a passing reference to the storming of the Bastille and then moves on to the rise of Napoleon and the American Revolution and observes that 'all of these gave rise to many date setting schemes and prophetic time tables'.³¹

As George moves into Carey's India years he offers a reliable account of the missionary enterprise, particularly as regards dates and locations. However he does not deal in detail with aspects that could be perceived as outside of an Evangelical focus. The Caste System is never mentioned except in passing and Carey's 27 year campaign against *Sati* is limited to one page of discussion, after which we are reminded 'Carey never permitted his involvement in movements for social reform to substitute for, or take precedence over, the clear proclamation of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ'.³²

Beyond these biographies there is William Carey's general reputation within Evangelical Christianity. This Carey is often un-contextualised and exists primarily as a tool to encourage missionary endeavour. It has been suggested that this representation tells us more about the promoters of Carey than the subject himself.³³

Ernest Payne's introduction to the 1961 republication of *The Enquiry* offers important textual analysis as well as insight into the historical context. His recognition that the publishers of the *Enquiry* had, several years before, been prosecuted for publishing Thomas Paine's *Common Sense*, was a ground-breaking revelation and important as it linked Carey to a revolutionary literary community. When combined with the above assessments by S.P. Carey and letters from Andrew Fuller observed in Chapter Four, his work provides further insight into the political views Carey held whilst in Britain. As Carey was very much a peripheral figure, even amongst his own immediate context of the Northamptonshire Baptist Association, before the publishing of the *Enquiry* and

³⁰ Agnes Johnson, *Glimpses of Ancient Leicester: in six periods*, 312

³¹ *Op Cit*, 51

³² Timothy George, 151-152

³³ A. Christopher Smith, 'The Missiological Significance of the Serampore Trio', *Missiology*, October 1992 vol. 20 no. 4, 494

the founding of the Baptist Missionary Society in 1792, these contextual analyses provide important background. Carey was fortunate to be amongst an association of Baptist heavyweights. Andrew Fuller was one of the preeminent theologians of the Baptist movement, J.C. Ryland was a second generation pastor and would eventually become central to Baptist theological training, and even John Sutcliff was a more significant figure than Carey. It is small wonder that so little detail survived. Payne's research, alongside Fuller's recollections, provides some insight into Carey's personal beliefs outside of the general narrative followed by Evangelical writers.

E. Daniel Potts' *British Baptist Missionaries in India 1793-1837* provides detailed archival study of the society from the arrival of Carey and Thomas until the death of Joshua Marshman closed the door on the 'Serampore Trio'.³⁴ Potts has immersed himself in the Angus Library archives at Regent's Park College, Oxford and therefore his examination of the missionaries' enterprises at Debharta, Mudnabhati and Serampore is probably the most detailed available and provides examination of a wide range of missionaries' initiatives. The archival research is so exemplary that if one simply wanted to know what Carey did he would only require Potts' work. However he provides no context to the work before examining the Baptist Missionary Society in India. He makes occasional references to historical context within the text but these are limited to brief, and sometimes dismissive, remarks.

An example of the above would be his reference to equality in missionary government. He recognises the principle in Jefferson's *Declaration of Independence* but dismisses it as 'having no place ... (in mission) or as a rule of government'.³⁵ In addition to this he makes reference to Baptist achievements in India but draws no parallels, even when they are obvious. His reference to slavery in India draws no link to the fact that Baptists were prominent in abolition in Britain or to the fact that Carey references the slave trade at several points in his *Enquiry*. In general he regularly answers the question 'What did the

³⁴ The term Serampore Trio is a reference to the three most prominent members of the Baptist Missionary Society's Serampore Mission Station. It is comprised of William Carey, William Ward and Joshua Marshman.

³⁵ E. Daniel Potts, *British Baptist Missionaries in India, 1793 – 1837*, 23

Serampore Missionaries do?’ but rarely moves on to the question ‘Why did they do it?’

Missiographies have generally focussed on the influences of imperialism and enlightenment whilst providing more critical and focussed analyses of Carey. Where they have focussed exclusively on the Baptist Missionary Society they are detailed and informative. Given Carey’s prominence in the history of British Mission, more general missiographies have of necessity reflected on his enterprise. Whilst these are often in-depth, scholarly works they are generally unable to devote sufficient time to transition from macroscopic statements regarding British mission to microscopic assessments of Carey in light of those statement. This often creates a situation in which they are right about mission generally but wrong regarding Carey specifically. However, some significant works have been influential in the writing of this thesis either through offering corroboration or through providing dialogue.

Lata Mani provides an in-depth analysis of Carey’s campaign against *Sati*. Mani’s focus on the response of missionaries and reformers to *Sati* makes this text more important as a dialogue partner than the more popular *Ashes of Immortality*.³⁶ Mani builds a compelling analysis of missionary attitudes to Hinduism, centred on missionaries’ misunderstanding of Hindu sacred texts. She contends that they took a western understanding of Christian scripture and transposed that idea into Indian culture and so built a strategy of learning vernacular languages, studying indigenous texts and engaging in debate with native scholars, particularly Brahmins, as to the accuracy of their textual understanding. This process, she observes, resembled Protestant reactions to Catholic traditions in 16th century Europe and was inadequate in India, where an appeal to religious writings was an appeal to a way of life not a written text.³⁷

Additionally Mani makes a significant contribution through her analysis of missionary presentations of indigenous practices, especially within missionary writings. She suggests missionaries overemphasised negative aspects of native

³⁶ Catherine Weinberger-Thomas, *Ashes of Immortality*, is referenced in Chapter 6 and the greater importance of Lata Mani’s work is further demonstrated.

³⁷ Lata Mani, *Contentious Traditions, The Debate on Sati in Colonial India*, 90ff

culture in the interests of fundraising. She observes this process in the work of Carey's missionary counterpart William Ward, particularly in his book, *A View of the History, Literature and Mythology of the Hindoos* (hereafter *Hindoos*). Mani suggests that his second edition, following the renewal of the East India Charter in 1813, was more derogatory of Hindu practices in general.³⁸ Mani is able to observe a less aggressive approach in Ward's references to *Sati* when comparing his private papers against his correspondence or published works.³⁹ Mani's work is relevant in each of the four chapters of Part Two and as such she represents this thesis' major dialogue partner.

Anna Johnson's *Missionary Writing and Empire 1800-1860* offers a similar analysis of missionary responses to India as that observed in Mani's *Contentious Traditions*. Johnson's significant contribution is the analysis of missionary literature as a genre, particularly as it relates to correspondence between missionaries and their supporters at home. Johnson is able to discern a double vision developing in missionary literature. Missionaries necessarily reported negative aspects of Indian culture in order to create recognition of the depravity of the human condition. This process was unnecessary in home mission where depravity was generally accepted, however the depiction of the 'noble savage' created by orientalist had challenged this theological position in respect to India. In order to maintain donation levels, and therefore funding and personal financial security, missionaries emphasised aspects of the culture that supported their views. Whilst demonstrating this depravity was important, it was necessary that a balance be maintained in order that indigenous people be seen as redeemable in spite of that depravity,⁴⁰ and for this reason missionary successes were equally a focus of the literature. Johnson's work, which builds on Mani's (a direct influence is never stated), is important and this thesis will dialogue with it whilst recognising that she focuses specifically on the London Missionary Society and their literature.

Jeffery Cox's *The British Missionary Enterprise since 1700* is one of the more significant examinations of the British missionary enterprise in the last 10 years.

³⁸ *Ibid*, 129

³⁹ *Ibid*, 145

⁴⁰ Anna Johnson, *Missionary Writing and Empire, 1800-1860*, 199

His work provides analysis of both voluntarist and confessional modes of mission. Following Anna Johnson, Cox offers continuing critique of the Stanley-Porter line and observes key trends in missionaries' support of empire, both when it is covert and overt, intentional and unintentional.⁴¹ He importantly develops Johnson's double vision theory regarding missionary writing, postulating that missionaries intentionally focused on the negative aspects of religious culture in order to drive fundraising efforts and increase the necessity of the missionary work being undertaken.⁴² His major development of Johnson's theory appears to be his recognition that missionary criticisms of Hinduism during their homiletical addresses to native audiences were minor when compared to literature designed for home consumption.

In demonstrating the above point Cox also follows Mani's *Contentious Traditions* in observing that William Ward's *Hindoos* offers a far more critical analysis of Hinduism in its second edition.⁴³ Cox develops this thought through his recognition that the second edition was created particularly for home consumption. Due to the Serampore connection between Ward and William Carey, Cox uses *Hindoos* and the views demonstrated as encompassing of the Serampore missionaries in general.⁴⁴ This thesis will offer dialogue with Cox in several chapters.

Thomas Schirrmacher's *Be Keen to Get Going – The Theology of William Carey* provides the only in-depth analysis of William Carey's post-millennial eschatology and its importance for his mission theory and praxis. Building on the work of Iain Murray's *The Puritan Hope*, Schirrmacher's observes the influence of his post-millennialist position as it impacts his optimistic view of the world and world missions. Whilst Schirrmacher's study is crucial to this thesis, in that it links Carey to post-millennialism, an optimistic view of the world and the potential for its regeneration, it is unfortunate that he does not examine Carey's mission praxis in light of these insights. Whilst recognising the important fact

⁴¹ Jeffery Cox, *The British Missionary Enterprise Since 1700*, 119

⁴² *Ibid*, 120

⁴³ The text went through significant editing and 3 editions were printed over the following ten years (Pennington, *Hindu Christian*, 1) Ward edited as he studied further and the title changed in following editions although it always remained vaguely similar.

⁴⁴ Cox, *The British Missionary Enterprise Since 1700*, 129-132

that post-millennial thought led to a different assessment of the world's future, he is unable to give attention to how it changed Carey's praxis in the Indian sub-continent. Part of the focus in this thesis will be to analyse Carey's praxis in light of Schirrmacher's observations. Whilst he is not strictly a dialogue partner, the important influence of his work on this thesis makes recognition here important.

Other materials

Both Brian Stanley and Andrew Porter have written detailed and informative works and developed an understanding of the missionary enterprise and its attitude to the imperial system. As the author generally concurs with their assessments they do not provide dialogue here. They are both referenced as supporting evidence but do not receive detailed examination.

Brian Stanley's *History of the Baptist Missionary Society*, like Potts' *Baptist Missionaries in India*, provides detailed knowledge of the Baptist Missionary Society archives and also provides detailed analysis of the historical context. In addition to his work on the Baptist Missionary Society specifically, Stanley has also authored important texts on the historical context of the early British missionary movement. Both *Christian Missions and the Enlightenment* and *The Bible and the Flag: Protestant Mission and British Imperialism in the 19th and 20th Centuries* recognise the historical context that the missionary enterprise began in. The first recognises the tension between enlightenment goals and missionary endeavour and the second challenges the generally held assumption that missionaries were imperialistic. Brian Stanley's summary of missionary prepositions in *Christian Missions and the Enlightenment* has been repeatedly important within this thesis.⁴⁵

Andrew Porter's *Religion versus Empire: British Protestant Missionaries and Overseas Expansion* bases itself around two 'well-worn' paths of mission historiography. Porter recognises that missionaries have generally been charged with being firstly 'an advocate of imperialism' and secondly 'a destroyer of

⁴⁵ Brian Stanley, *Christian Missions and the Enlightenment*, 8

indigenous culture and values'.⁴⁶ This line has been so predominant that it has been virtually impossible for historiographers to credit another line. Along with Brian Stanley, Porter has been important in recognising that missionaries often embodied many other traits.

⁴⁶ Andrew Porter, *Religion Versus Empire British Protestant Missionaries and Overseas Expansion*, 316

Chapter 2

The Context of the Late 18th Century

(This Chapter will outline the historical context preceding Carey's voyage to India. This is important groundwork for the second half of the thesis, which examines Carey's praxis whilst in India. Based on this context and the following examinations of the Northamptonshire Baptist Association and Carey's years in Britain, I will shape a value system for Carey pre-India that will be indispensable in determining influences or motivations upon his mission praxis.)

Evangelical Developments

A fair process of contextualisation must begin with the most explicit/overt influencing factor, in this case the development of Evangelicalism, before progressing to more implicit/covert influences. Scholarship of religion has often been ignored in historical analyses of the 18th century due to a historical focus that has understood the century as primarily rationalist and secular. Study of religion in this period has recently experienced a renaissance due to growing recognition that religious affiliation continued to fashion political and social identity.⁴⁷

Whilst observing that Evangelicalism cannot be tied to any denomination, D.W. Bebbington has highlighted four key qualities of Evangelicalism that are visible across denominational lines.⁴⁸ He labels these as 'conversionism, the belief that lives need to be changed; activism, the expression of the gospel in effort; biblicism, a particular regard for the bible; and what may be called crucicentrism, a stress on the sacrifice of Christ on the cross. Together they form a quartet of priorities that is the basis of Evangelicalism'.⁴⁹

The importance of these priorities cannot be overstated, and of particular relevance here is their interdependence upon one another. Susan Thorne reinforces the importance of the shift in thinking that took place in the Evangelical circle during this period.⁵⁰ This process is informative of what

⁴⁷ John Walsh, *The Church of England C.1689 – C.1833: From Toleration to Tractarianism*, ix

⁴⁸ D.W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in modern Britain, a history from the 1730s to the 1980s*, 1

⁴⁹ *Ibid*, 2f

⁵⁰ Susan Thorne, *Congregational Missions and the Making of an Imperial Culture in the Nineteenth Century*, 29

Bebbington terms conversionism. Examining the missionary enterprise of John Wesley, she observes a form of evangelism that was primarily defined by the subject. Thorne identifies the motivation behind Wesley's enterprise as good works enabling the missionary to obtain salvation. Wesley's journal reveals a religious self that is aware of spiritual emptiness in spite, or perhaps because of, his Christian faith; and in this Thorne is able to observe a trend that shows initial conversion as one step in a process that must contain good works to bring it to completion. Wesley's experience of the soteriological process was transformed during a meeting at Aldersgate, in which his 'heart was strangely warmed'.⁵¹ Wesley's experience is an example of a personal experience leading to an increasingly strong theology of conversion.

As priority of conversionism developed in Evangelical Britain, it diverged down two soteriological streams. The Arminian stream, as represented primarily by Methodists, understood a key point of soteriology to hinge on individual choice. The work of Christ was open to all and required a response from the individual who was able to make a choice. Calvinist thought maintained a doctrine of election in which individual believers were predestined and experienced 'irresistible grace'.⁵² Although the above understanding demonstrates a significant difference between Arminian and Calvinist theology it is important to recognise that both streams highlighted the importance of individual conversion.

Throughout Dissenting groups, the Calvinist line of thought became prominent, and within the Particular Baptist church, a variation of the traditional doctrine, known as hyper-Calvinism (or High Calvinism), became common. This variation essentially removed the necessity of evangelical activity, as the elect would demonstrate their election by their entering into communion with the local church. This theological position removed the imposition upon the unelect to repent.⁵³ Whilst requiring those outside to demonstrate their election by coming inside, it also ensured that preaching focused almost entirely on the converted

⁵¹ John Wesley, *Journals of ...*, 24.5.1738, p36

⁵² Whilst there has been dispute of how closely the 'Calvinist' line represents the teaching of John Calvin it has become ubiquitously attached to his name. Laurence Vance, *The Other Side of Calvinism* provides detailed examination of Calvin's thought and its relationship to Calvinism as a stream.

⁵³ Peter J. Morden, 'So Valuable a Life', *Strict Baptist Journal of Theology*, 17.1 (2013), 5

and resulted in many preachers having almost ‘nothing to say to the unconverted’.⁵⁴ It made any attempts to engage evangelistically with those around you presumptive at best. J.C. Ryland would observe, of the theological context in which these developments took place, that some denied that it was ‘the duty of all men to whom the gospel is published, to repent and believe’.⁵⁵

Evangelicals understanding of their own conversion, and its significance, often led to a greater sense of the same need in others, or in Bebbington’s terms, activism. Jonathan Edwards makes the observation that converted people ‘have commonly expressed an exceeding great desire for the conversion of others’.⁵⁶ This sense of activism was brought into a state of uncertainty when encountering the theological doctrine of hyper-Calvinism. The intense biblicism (Bebbington’s third term) within Evangelicalism demanded a biblical framework in order to bring theology and praxis into harmony.

Important developments concerning this aspect of Evangelical theology can be traced to William Carey through three important historical figures; Jonathan Edwards, Robert Hall Snr and Andrew Fuller. This process will focus on the work and/or writings of these key figures whilst providing supporting evidence based on the movements around them. Edwards has been chosen because of his theological influence on the Northamptonshire Baptist Association in general, as well as being the driving force behind their call to prayer of 1784. Hall has been chosen because of Carey’s early acknowledgment of the influence that *Help to Zion’s Travellers* had upon his theological development. Fuller has been recognised by Brian Stanley as the driving force behind the theology of the Northamptonshire Baptist Association and later the Particular Baptist Society for the Propagation of the Gospel to the Heathen.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ *Ibid*

⁵⁵ John Ryland Jnr, *The Work of Faith, the Labour of Love, and the Patience of Hope Illustrated; in the Life and Death of the Reverend Andrew Fuller*, 5

⁵⁶ Bebbington, 10

⁵⁷ Brian Stanley, *The Bible and the Flag: Protestant Mission and British Imperialism in the 19th and 20th Centuries*, 60

Jonathan Edwards

In 1748 Jonathan Edwards, an American Reformed preacher and theologian, took part in an intercontinental movement known as the 'concert of prayer', designed to encourage prayer with the aim of advancing revival.⁵⁸ Edwards delivered a series of sermons based around Zechariah 7:20-22. This series was expanded into a book entitled *An Humble Attempt to Promote Explicit Agreement and Visible Union of God's People in Extraordinary Prayer for the Revival of Religion and the Advancement of Christ's Kingdom on Earth* (Hereafter: *Humble Attempt*). Edwards understood the text to reference an approaching increase to the church. A 'future glorious advancement' would be ushered in by 'great multitudes in different towns and countries taking up a joint resolution' to commit to 'extraordinary prayer'.⁵⁹

Whilst the concert of prayer organised by Edwards in colonial America didn't last, *Humble Attempt* was the inspiration behind the Baptist call to prayer of 1784. J.C. Ryland received a copy of the work in a selection of books from America and, knowing the esteem with which Andrew Fuller and John Sutcliff held Edwards, passed the work onto others. Sutcliff became editor of the works in Britain, publishing it twice, once in 1784 and once in 1789.⁶⁰ Whilst Edwards stopped short of promoting missionary endeavor within *Humble Attempt*, there appears to be little doubt that such attempts were on his mind. His publication of the *Life of Brainerd* suggests a tacit approval of missionary activity. Van den Berg suggests that Edwards set in motion the change of attitude to missions within Baptist circles.⁶¹

Whilst *Humble Attempt* is recognised as important in the developmental process of key Baptist Missionary Society theologians, and in the Northamptonshire Baptist Association's praxis on prayer, Morden demonstrates that Edwards'

⁵⁸ J. Van den Berg, *Constrained by Jesus Love: An inquiry into the motives of the missionary awakening in Great Britain in the period between 1698 and 1816*, 127

⁵⁹ Jonathan Edwards, 'An Humble Attempt to Promote Explicit Agreement and Visible Union of God's People in Extraordinary Prayer for the Revival of Religion and the Advancement of Christ's Kingdom on Earth' *The Works of Jonathan Edwards, A.M.*, 281

⁶⁰ R. Pierce Beaver, 'A Concert for Prayer for Missions: An Early Venture in Ecumenical Action' *The Ecumenical Review*, Volume 10, Issue 4, 420-427, July 1958

⁶¹ *Op Cit*, 114

1777 work, *A Careful and Strict Enquiry into the Modern Prevailing Notions of the Freedom of the Will* (hereafter: *Freedom of the Will*), may have been more influential theologically. He observes the importance of Edwards' distinction between a 'natural ability' and a 'moral ability' to respond to Christ's salvific work. The fact that mankind had no natural inability to respond insured that they remained 'criminally culpable'.⁶² This observation began to raise questions regarding the theological legitimacy of hyper-Calvinism.

Robert Hall

Robert Hall was a prominent pastor amongst Particular Baptists in the Midlands. His *Help to Zion's Travellers*, whilst having a significantly broader focus than missionary activity or even soteriology in general, was particularly influential in the area surrounding his Arnesby church.⁶³ As the book outlines all aspects of the Christian faith, only one chapter is particularly significant here. Chapter 3 focuses on the doctrine of election, specifically the criticisms of the doctrine made by those holding opposing positions.⁶⁴ First, he offers response to criticism that those who find themselves outside of the elect are doomed to individual destruction, thus making it highly injurious to those that are not elected. Hall suggests this supposition has a negative reflection on the justice of God. He concludes that, whilst the doctrine of election had been understood in the above manner, this interpretation is incorrect.⁶⁵ Hall's work demonstrates the theological debate behind hyper-Calvinism. Whilst a modern examination might suppose hyper-Calvinism to focus on negating missionary work, this aspect is merely a secondary result of the argument itself. The significant focus of hyper-Calvinism was on soteriology in general and its relationship to the individual's role in that process. Hall's position, therefore, does not involve an argument in favour of missionary activity but more a rejection of the hyper-Calvinism position.

⁶² *Ibid*, 6

⁶³ Graham W. Hughes, 'Robert Hall of Arnesby 1728 – 1791', *Baptist Quarterly* 10.8, (1941), 444
Studies on the life of Robert Hall Snr are limited and this excellent 1941 study was useful in providing information on Hall's background.

⁶⁴ Robert Hall, *Help to Zion's Travellers*, 38

⁶⁵ *Ibid*, 40

Andrew Fuller

Andrew Fuller was not a man of theological training, but rather described by William Wilberforce as 'the picture of a blacksmith'.⁶⁶ He became, through deep commitment, one of the pre-eminent theologians of the 18th century Baptist movement. Fuller's theological credentials were recognised by leading Anglican Clergyman, Richard Cecil, in spite of Cecil's own disapproval of the Particular Baptist denomination and its newly found society.⁶⁷ Fuller penned *The Gospel worthy of All Acceptation* in 1781 following a personal theological shift. His early theological mentor John Eve had reinforced the hyper-Calvinist position and suggested 'preachers should not "offer the gospel" to the non-elects who do not possess the ability to respond positively'.⁶⁸

Fuller's commitment to hyper-Calvinism first was challenged through his encounter with Abraham Taylor's pamphlet entitled *The Modern Question Concerning Repentance and Faith Examined*.⁶⁹ Although this pamphlet was important Chun notes that Fuller 'actively worked through his theology to give a proper theological base for his ever increasing evangelical convictions'.⁷⁰ Fuller gives primary acknowledgment for this shift to his own thorough examination of the biblical texts.⁷¹

Fuller's work begins with a re-examination of the theological position he himself endorsed prior to writing. The majority of the text is taken up with an examination of the duty of all people to respond positively or negatively to the gospel (being understood here as the spoken word of witness describing the salvific work of Christ). As the hyper-Calvinist position had encouraged a certain resignation regarding individual choice, this work can be seen as crucial in the development of the more moderate Calvinist position, and as equally significant in removing obstacles blocking missionary enterprise. Peter Morden recognises a shift in both Fullers preaching and theology from 1779 but also that his

⁶⁶ Ford K. Brown, *Fathers of the Victorians*, 505

⁶⁷ Peter J. Morden, 'So Valuable a Life', *Strict Baptist Journal of Theology*, 17.1 (2013), 4

⁶⁸ Chris Chun, *The Legacy of Jonathan Edwards in the Theology of Andrew Fuller*, 37

⁶⁹ *Ibid*

⁷⁰ *Ibid*

⁷¹ Andrew Fuller, 'Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation', *The Complete Works of Andrew Fuller*, 150

departure from a hyper-Calvinist position was taken with ‘some trepidation’.⁷² Chun recognises the important influence of Jonathan Edwards previously noted *Freedom of the Will*, and observes that Fuller’s first edition mentions the important distinction between natural ability and moral ability outlined in the work.⁷³ Whilst Edwards’ polemic was directed towards Arminianism, Fuller had a second target in mind. He was convinced these terms would allow him to offer opposition to hyper-Calvinism.⁷⁴ Piggin makes the assessment that it was Fuller who ‘demolished the objections of the Particular Baptists to offering salvation to all men’.⁷⁵ Timothy George recognises the connection between Edwards and Fuller and suggests that Edwards’ work was instrumental in convincing Fuller that evangelism and Calvinism were reconcilable.⁷⁶

None of the above writers necessarily rescinded from a Calvinist doctrine. Fuller in particular maintained a dislike of Arminian theology. The function of the three works are largely to restate the Calvinist position in terms they found to be scriptural, and suggest that this restatement was more in line with Calvin’s original theological stance. This position was in line with Carey’s own understanding and demonstrative of the influence they had on him. Whilst Carey reached many of his own conclusions prior to his encounters with the works of Hall and Fuller, it appears that their work gave his own theological developments additional endorsement.⁷⁷ Carey clearly considered himself a Calvinist theologically and retained his focus on the sovereignty of God in conversion, but his own theological studies, and the support he received through Edwards, Hall and Fuller, removed the bar upon active missionary enterprise.

⁷² *Op Cit*, 5

⁷³ Chun, 32

⁷⁴ *Ibid*, 33

⁷⁵ Stuart Piggin, *Making Evangelical Missionaries*, 81

⁷⁶ Timothy George, *Faithful Witness*, 55

⁷⁷ Andrew Fuller records that Carey had been encouraged by Jonathan Edwards writings but had arrived at this position primarily through his own biblical study. (Eustace Carey, *Memoir of William Carey*, 45). Drewery observes the influence of Fuller upon Carey’s soteriological position and observes Carey as acknowledging this influence. (Mary Drewery, *William Carey*, 42)

Post-Millennial Theological Developments

(This section examines the relatively overlooked area of eschatological thought as it relates to Particular Baptists in the late 18th century. Whilst the importance of hyper-Calvinism, and the Edwards-Hall-Fuller revision of it, is acknowledged within the majority of missiological works, eschatological thought is rarely examined in detail. I would suggest it has potential implications for how missionaries determined their praxis.)

Whilst Evangelical developments were important in the development of mission theology, the factors underpinning Carey's missiology were more extensive than a fresh restatement of an existing soteriological position. Significant impetus came from a particular eschatological understanding very different from the eschatological views found within most modern missionary efforts. Thomas Schirrmacher observes that this has often gone unrecognised by Carey's biographers, including those who have focused on his theology.⁷⁸

Klaus Fiedler suggests that missionary societies may usefully be categorised as pre-classical, classical or post-classical.⁷⁹ Pre-classical encompasses the mission movements of the mid to late 18th century that came predominantly out of the pietistic tradition. Classical missionary societies cover the large number of denominational and inter-denominational societies that followed the development of the Baptist Missionary Society in 1792. The denominational societies generally contained some reference to their authorizing body within the title of the mission. The inter-denominational societies such as the London Missionary Society were a collaboration of a number of societies with similar theological and missiological frameworks. Carey had initially hoped to found such a society before settling for a denominational option.⁸⁰ Post-classical societies are summarised as the independent societies, which held no allegiance to a denomination but placed all authority in the hands of its founder. Although Fiedler acknowledges the China Inland Mission was not the first of these, it is the most prominent early example.⁸¹

⁷⁸ Thomas Schirrmacher, *Keen to Get Going – William Carey's Theology*, 14

⁷⁹ Klaus Fiedler, *Story of Faith Missions*, 19

⁸⁰ William Carey, *Enquiry*, 84

⁸¹ *Op Cit*, 24

Thomas Schirrmacher develops this analysis in order to demonstrate the differing eschatological views represented by classical and post-classical missionary societies. According to Schirrmacher classical societies were, broadly speaking, post-millennial whilst post-classical societies were broadly pre-millennial.⁸² This created a distinct contrast not only in their mission theology but also within their mission praxis. Developing the work of R.G Grouce and L Boettner, Schirrmacher demonstrates that post-millennial theology generally contained a less pessimistic view of the future.⁸³ The general belief, found within post-millennial theology, that the world would be shaped by Christianity as it grew and that Christ-like values and ethics would become prevalent, made missionary work an important focus. This increase in Christian values would come through conversion and conversion would follow the preaching of the Gospel. Andrew Porter suggests there was ‘evidence of an impending biblically predicted age of peace (and) plenty’.⁸⁴ This view can be connected directly to the Northamptonshire Baptist Association through Andrew Fuller’s exposition on the book of Revelation, including positive references to post-millennial theology.⁸⁵

Jurgen Moltmann has further developed this particular aspect of eschatological thought through the observation of a shift in popular thinking between the 17th and 18th centuries. He recognises that although later mission societies would make a shift away from post-millennial thought and embrace a more dispensational line, this process merely reversed a similar trend that had taken place in the previous centuries. Schirrmacher’s also makes this observation noting that Martin Luther’s eschatological views had a toxic effect on any attempts to engage missionally with the world supports this view. Luther believed in a literal end of the physical world brought about by the *parousia* of Christ.⁸⁶ Only the advent of the pietistic movement allowed eschatology to move on and world mission to develop.

⁸² Thomas Schirrmacher, *Keen to Get Going – William Carey’s Theology*, 14

⁸³ *Ibid*, 14

⁸⁴ Andrew Porter, *Religion versus Empire*, 33

⁸⁵ Paul Brewster, *Andrew Fuller, Model Pastor – Theologian*, 60

⁸⁶ Thomas Schirrmacher, *Be Keen to Get Going – The Theology of William Carey*, 22

During the 17th century prominent Christian teaching (there were of course no mission societies within Britain) favoured a pre-millennial view of the eschaton.⁸⁷ Both this view and its post-millennial counterpart centred on a millennium concept drawn from Revelation 20:1-6.⁸⁸ Moltmann recognises that the 17th Century pre-millennial view primarily saw the *parousia* of Christ as an evacuation.⁸⁹ This encouraged an understanding of the Earth as passing and soon to be destroyed. The shift to post-millennial thinking generated a higher view of the Earth as being renewed.⁹⁰

Interestingly, this paralleled the developing secular climate. The increasing dominance of modernity had encouraged a view of progress along similar lines to the post-millennial theology prevalent in the late 18th century church. This concept of progress merely exchanged God for science or something similar. It maintained a hopeful view of humanity and a belief that humanity, when aided by science, economics, etc. would gradually bring improvement to the world. This view was potentially a very western view. It understood western culture to be superior, or at least more advanced, and understood improvement of eastern cultures along western lines to be desirable. Whilst this eschatological focus was the dominant feature behind the optimistic view of the future developing in certain Christian circles, a hope for an increasingly improving world also opened them up to other late 18th century influences. The missionary enterprise was linked to this eschatological view, which, in turn, was linked to events in France and America.⁹¹

⁸⁷ Richard Bauckham, 'The Millennium' in *God will be All in All; The Eschatology of Jurgen Moltmann*, 132

⁸⁸ Modern Christian teaching has generally carried an a-millennial focus assuming the reference to 1000 years to be a figurative/apocalyptic statement rather than a literal reference point. Both pre and post-millennialism maintain room for a literal 1000 year reign of Christ although this, particularly in the case of post-millennialism, can be a spiritualised or invisible reign rather than literal one.

⁸⁹ Jurgen Moltmann, *The Coming of God*, 159 cited in Richard Bauckham, 'The Millennium', *God will be all in all; The Eschatology of Jurgen Moltmann*, 129

⁹⁰ *Ibid*, 126

⁹¹ J. Van den Berg, *Constrained ...*, 104

The Wider 18th Century

(An examination of the wider context within which Carey found himself. This includes examination of the Enlightenment. This movement can be considered as Scientific, Explorative, Philosophical and Political.)

The Enlightenment

The mid-late 18th century into which Carey was born is connected deeply to the enlightenment.⁹² Although enlightenment is often considered a philosophical movement, it was initially scientific, and its roots lie deep in the scientific discoveries of the previous century. Science had demonstrated that the universe was accessible through a scientific approach and could be examined and studied and conclusions could be drawn. Rationally, a similar approach could now be attempted regarding existential thought. This prompted an important shift in which the study of God was no longer the province of theologians alone and the term 'theologian' became increasingly negative in its connotations. David Bosch recognises that these developments resulted in the removal of religion from the centre of all life.⁹³ Whilst the idea of general revelation (in which a divine being revealed himself through nature) still carried some credence, increasingly concepts such as scripture as revelation became unpopular. This shift is visible in Andrew Fuller's condemnation of the position Thomas Paine took in *The Age of Reason*.⁹⁴

The first global circumnavigation had taken place many years previous but sea travel remained inherently dangerous. Explorers risked their personal safety for the acclaim that came with new discoveries. Nor was global navigation limited to

⁹² Enlightenment is a term that is often confused or considered to overlap with the term 'modernity'. This thesis follows the understanding of Gunther Lottes, who observes the enlightenment as the 'founding period of modernity'. Lottes understands this enlightenment as drawing from three primary sources. The religious changes following the challenge to, and weakening of, the Catholic church instigated by Martin Luther, the scientific revolution, which altered the criteria of truth and challenged the concept of revelation and the increasing wealth of knowledge which challenged the Christian worldview. (Gunther Lottes, *Die Kunst der Aufklärung*, 1f)

⁹³ David Bosch, *Transforming Mission, Paradigm Shifts in the Theology of Mission*, 267

⁹⁴ Michael Haykin offers a full discussion of Paine's *Age of Reason* and Fuller's implicit counter arguments to Paine's deist position. Whilst Paine was raised a Quaker by 1794 he was able to assert he was comfortable with all forms of church and could speak against direct revelation. Fuller expressed his belief that scripture contained the 'oracles of God' in a particular way and that this could not be diminished. Michael Haykin, "'Oracles of God' Andrew Fuller and the Scriptures", *Churchman* 103/1 1989 (electronic) 2-4

explorers. The potential wealth accessible through trade of exotic goods encouraged merchants to venture further afield. Whilst the fate of a nation in previous times had been tied to the monarch, and was maintained by their personal leadership, one of the results of the epoch shift emerging from the enlightenment was the nullification of this principle. The increasingly capitalist nature of economics offered a new focus in a new social order.⁹⁵ A country's wealth and security rested on its mercantile success. Britain ruled a significant portion of America and India and the income this developed enabled the nation to maintain its virtual hegemony. This mercantile focus was one of the primary changes that gave rise to capitalism.⁹⁶

As the knowledge base grew the way that knowledge was shared, was changing. It was true to say that 'more was known' but it was equally true to say that 'it was known by more people'. The invention of the printing press in 1423, and its further development in the years that followed, contributed extensively to this, as a greater number of books were available to a growing number of readers.⁹⁷ Although arguments can be made for either, a short revolution, or a long revolution, there was a revolution of some kind.⁹⁸ Crompton dates the beginning of the written enlightenment as 1690, the year that Elizabeth Holt printed John Locke's *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*.⁹⁹ Although this date is useful in it was just it was just the beginning of a vast curve and 'the number of books printed in London grew from 6000 between 1620 and 1630 to around 56 000 between 1780-1790'.¹⁰⁰ Whilst basic education was also increasing there was also an increased ability to share ideas.¹⁰¹ Thoughts that originated in Paris were

⁹⁵ N. Birnbaum, 'Conflicting Interpretations of the Rise of Capitalism: Marx and Weber', *The British Journal of Sociology*, Vol 4, no 2, Jun 1953, 127

⁹⁶ This position appears to date back at least as far as Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* (1776). Smith dissected the role of mercantile interest in the present economic situation of his time. David McNally describes Smith's position as duping the public into believing 'that what (served) the interests of these capitalist groups (served) the interests of the public'. David McNally, *Political Economy and the Rise of Capitalism*, 222

⁹⁷ Lucien Febvre and Henri Jean-Martin, *The Coming of the Book: The Impact of Printing, 1450-1800*, 24

⁹⁸ Elizabeth Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change*, 61

⁹⁹ Samuel Crompton, *The Printing Press: Transforming Power of Technology*, 65

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid*

¹⁰¹ Lucien Febvre and Henri Jean-Martin, *The Coming of the Book: The Impact of Printing, 1450-1800*, 10

now increasingly available in London, or Edinburgh or even America. This leads us to the development of philosophical thought.

Philosophy

Through the work of Locke the conversation moved from natural law to natural rights.¹⁰² The question of what the term liberty actually meant became central; was liberty the right to justice and good government or was it about self-realisation, quality of life and moral choice?¹⁰³ This developing philosophical enlightenment¹⁰⁴ carried as a repeated refrain the idea that ‘in principle men were equal’. With this understanding came the belief that human rights could be disseminated in the world through the rational application of knowledge.

In France the *philosophes* movement was dominated by the development of republicanism; and, in turn, Jean Jacques Rousseau dominated French republican thought and was central to political revolutions in both France and America. A *Discourse on Equality* suggested that human beings’ two fundamental principles are self-love (in a non destructive form) and pity.¹⁰⁵ These principles enable mankind to function in self-preservation but also care for his fellow man. In his development of principles of equality Rousseau was able to distinguish between natural inequalities such as strength and civil inequalities such as wealth and power.¹⁰⁶

These principles of equality led to two overlapping movements that must be examined here. Firstly, as mentioned above, they were, directly or indirectly, the dominating influence upon the political movements in America and France. The initial American Revolution was based primarily around the issue of taxation. This continued policy, maintained by George the III, became overly burdensome to the colonists. They highlighted the injustice of taxation without any

¹⁰² Owen Chadwick, *The Secularisation of Britain*, 25

¹⁰³ *Ibid*, 26

¹⁰⁴ The philosophical enlightenment in Britain, was paralleled by the *philosophes* movement in France and the *aufklärung* in German speaking countries

¹⁰⁵ Jean Jacques Rousseau, *Discourse on Inequality*, 109-11

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid*, 29

representation and claimed that, given this continued injustice, the British Empire had forfeited any rights to their allegiance.¹⁰⁷

Jefferson's personal draft of the *Declaration of Independence* stated that all men were born 'certain equal, with inherent and inalienable rights'.¹⁰⁸ Whilst the language appears to carry a distinct flavour of Rousseau, scholars have been divided on the subject of Rousseau's influence on the Declaration. It is a fair assessment that Rousseau had little direct influence on the Declaration, but in spite of this his influence can be felt in a less direct manner.

Tom Paine's *Common Sense* was written in direct response to what he termed the 'American Affair'.¹⁰⁹ To Paine, government was a necessary evil. It was like clothing, a symbol of lost innocence. Government was a defense against that evil but when it failed in its duty it became worse than no government.¹¹⁰ Paine's initial focus is a polemic against a monarchical government. Whilst he understood that men and women could be differentiated based on nature, and good and evil could be differentiated based on religious moral grounds, he found the division of human beings into Kings and Subjects to be insupportable on any grounds.¹¹¹ Although Paine understood a monarchical system to be fundamentally flawed, these flaws were exacerbated when coupled with hereditary succession. In spite of Paine's powerful critique of monarchy he could envisage a hypothetical monarch endowed with gifts that 'deserve some decent degree of honours of his contemporaries'. The possibility of such a monarch however did not allow for hereditary monarchy as there was no reason to suppose his successor would not be 'unworthy to inherit (those honours)'.¹¹²

¹⁰⁷ 'The earliest known reference to the idea is believed to have been in a sermon by the Boston preacher, the Reverend Jonathan Mayhew, in 1750. ² But it was the Massachusetts lawyer and renowned colonial firebrand, James Otis, who popularized it.' Grant Dorfman, 'The Founders' Legal Case: No Taxation without Representation versus Taxation No Tyranny', *Houston Law Review*, Winter 2008, 1378

¹⁰⁸ Thomas Jefferson, 'Declaration of Independence (Jefferson's draft)', *Political Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, 97

¹⁰⁹ Thomas Paine, *Common Sense*, 4

¹¹⁰ *Ibid*, 4

¹¹¹ *Ibid*, 9

¹¹² *Ibid*, 12

Paine believed he was developing Rousseau's theory and taking it to application.¹¹³ In this respect, Paine became Rousseau's influence upon the Declaration of Independence. If Rousseau's influence was felt in America, albeit through the medium of Thomas Paine, it is to be expected that France would feel the effect all the more. The Revolutionaries' fundamentally built themselves on the back of Rousseau. The events in France were far more excessive than revolutionary events in Britain in 1688 or America in 1776. Alison Patrick describes these prior revolutions as maintaining a posture of protection in that they were protecting or defending a way of life. The French Revolution, on the other hand, was removing everything.¹¹⁴ Rousseau did not start the French Revolution. He merely noted the events that led to it. People were hungry and did not need Rousseau to tell them this.¹¹⁵ However his influence can be directly observed through the use of the term 'general will'. This term is central to Rousseau's *Social Contract* and would later become central to the revolutionaries' *Declaration of the Rights of Man*. The French politician, Robespierre, in particular, latched onto this term in declaring it to be the only and fundamental basis for any law.¹¹⁶

In England the Revolution met with a spectrum of responses and politically became the hot topic of the day. The short distance between Britain and France made the political movement in France more dangerously persuasive to some and a source of greater hope for others. Andrew Porter¹¹⁷ recognises that general public feeling during this period suggested that England would, logically, be the next to experience Revolution. Whilst the ideology was moderate and reasonable to those who expounded it, it was terrifying and revolutionary to those against whom it was directed.¹¹⁸

British Politician, Edmund Burke's, *Reflections on the Revolution in France* has remained one of the most important political responses to the French Revolution

¹¹³ Thomas Paine, *Rights of Man* (Part 1), 43

¹¹⁴ Alison Patrick, *Revolution for Beginners*, 14

¹¹⁵ Chadwick, *Secularisation ...*, 11

¹¹⁶ Maximilien Robespierre, 'On the Right to Vote,' *Robespierre*, ed., George Rudé, 14.

¹¹⁷ Andrew Porter, *Religion versus Empire*, 92

¹¹⁸ M Thomis & P Holt, *Threats of Revolution in England 1789 – 1848*, 8

partly because of its 'undeniable rhetoric and literary power'¹¹⁹ and partly due to his stature as a politician. Burke understood the revolution to be treason of the highest order, and believed that the French had overthrown a benevolent King, one who deserved better treatment. Burke's understanding of the Glorious Revolution of 1688 was that the people of England had sworn to 'submit themselves, their heirs and posterities for ever'.¹²⁰ This made a revolution on similar terms to the one in France morally reprehensible as well as politically unacceptable. Interestingly, Burke had supported the American colonists in their revolution in 1776. To him the French Revolution was different. This had nothing to do with the later 'Terror' as the establishment of this view preceded later events. Crossley and Small assess that this distinction was primarily based around a difference of vote. Although the American Revolution would proclaim all men are created equal this was toned down in practice where 'vote' and 'land' were still very much tied.¹²¹

In the contrary assessment of Thomas Paine they were providing regeneration as opposed to revolution.¹²² Whilst this process might involve the removal of those in power, this was simply a means to regeneration not a purpose within itself. Paine suggested that the need for revolution did not necessarily extend to Britain. Whilst claiming that Monarchy had been forced on the people of Britain and maintained by similar force, he felt reason, rather than revolution was the answer. The present situation was inevitably coming to an end, and it would be beneficial to all if the conclusion were reached following a process of reasoned dialogue rather than through unnecessary convulsion. In following the development of Paine's logic the following was true. The poor of England were oppressed and this oppression was not simply a result of socio-economic factors. The problem was hereditary monarchy and therefore the following was also true. If you changed the system you erased the problem.¹²³

¹¹⁹ Frans De Bruyn, 'Anti-Semitism, Millenarianism, and Radical Dissent in Edmund Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France*', *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 34.4 (2001) 577-600

¹²⁰ Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, 17

¹²¹ Crossley and Small, *The French Revolution in British Culture*, 5

¹²² Thomas Paine, *Rights of Man ... (1791)*, 58

¹²³ Raphael Hormann, *Writing the Revolution*, 103

Paine's claim was largely inaccurate. Regardless of his intent, the ideas he presented were, by necessity, revolutionary, 'the idea of one man, one vote was, in the privileged, property-based government of the 1790s, a revolutionary one ... rejecting government by propertied elite and seeking to replace it by a sovereign people'.¹²⁴ This was revolutionary in its intent and whilst an older generation responded to revolution with fear, a younger generation of intellectuals saw it as 'the dawn of an era of universal righteousness'.¹²⁵

Whilst it is probable Carey had access to the political writings of both Burke and Paine, more obvious influences existed. Although Joseph Priestley and Richard Price came from a different branch of dissent their views, nevertheless, present a religious response rather than a political one. It would be unfair to dismiss the writings and sermons of Priestley and Price as simply the work of 'rational dissent'. Moderate dissenters supported the Revolution believing it would add to their freedom. As Martin suggests 'the revolution did a great deal to heighten millennial expectation. When studied in the light of the book of revelation there was a growing belief that anti-Christ (often linked to the Catholic Church) would fall and there would be an age of Christian growth coupled with the spread of religious and civil liberty'.¹²⁶ This connection between the Revolution, the millennium and civil liberties is important. Not only was there a belief that the Christian message would spread as an evangelistic proposition, but also that, as a result of that increase, that civil liberties would increase.

David Bogue recorded the attitudes of Dissenting ministers to the revolution as generally positive.¹²⁷ Many, he observed, could see the potential for religious freedom developing from the events transpiring in France.¹²⁸ Bogue had been a consistent supporter for the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts. The Acts forbade election or appointment to any official office of a person outside of the Church of England. An appointee must have partaken of communion under the authority of the Church within the previous year. Whilst this left plenty of room for pretense of religion it became a severe stumbling block to those of sincere

¹²⁴ Holt and Thomas, *Threats of revolution*, 6

¹²⁵ Van den Berg, *Constrained ...*, 110

¹²⁶ R.H. Martin, *Evangelicals UTD*, 28

¹²⁷ David Bogue, *History of Dissenters*, 194

¹²⁸ *Ibid*

conscience who practiced dissent. In the Revolution Bogue foresaw the potential for religious freedom within England but also the freedom for religion to spread.

Whilst the support for Revolution was by no means universal amongst dissenters it appears that Martin makes a correct assessment when he observes that even moderate dissenters initially approved of the revolution believing that it would lead to freedom.¹²⁹ As the Revolution developed and became more violent support waned. Burke's work of 1791 further heightened tensions in England. Bogue recalls that until this work it was possible for two people to disagree and yet remain on cordial terms. He highlights Burke's animosity toward the events in France as the tipping point. Following this the issue became a source of severe contention.¹³⁰

The Birmingham riots of 1791 were not, in Bogue's assessment, a traditional English mob of common men but the work of 'men of a superior class'. This oppression of the 'friends of liberty' became a general attitude.¹³¹ They were represented as supporters of all that took place in France and the increasing violence of the Revolution was used as an argument against liberty instead of an abuse of liberty. Whilst the later Terror would decide many in England against the revolutionaries it is not helpful to give it considerable examination here. Carey's removal from the immediate British context upon his departure for India in late 1792 meant that his experience of the French Revolution was at least moderately positive. It is important that we recognise Carey's position within this state of change. Cowherd's assessment that liberal reforms would become associated with the enemy and that 'civil and religious liberty were so eclipsed that the dissenters dare not agitate'¹³² was admittedly more true following the September massacres of 1792 but less true than it would become in 1794. Hole makes the assessment that there was a generally sympathetic attitude towards France for the 2-3 years after the Revolution.¹³³

¹²⁹ *Op cit*, 27

¹³⁰ David Bogue, *History of Dissenters*, 196

¹³¹ *Ibid*

¹³² Raymond Cowherd, *Politics of English Dissent*, 65

¹³³ R. Hole, *Pulpits, Politics and Public Order in England, 1760-1832*, 98

The force driving both the French Revolution and the development of revolutionary support in Britain was also driving another, overlapping movement. The idea of human rights that had developed through the works of Locke, Rousseau, Paine *et al*, whilst developing the republican ideology of the French Revolution, was also responsible for the developing question of equality. When speaking of equality the discussion had two streams, a local one, centred round the question 'were all men equal regardless of class?' and a worldwide question, 'were all men equal regardless of race?'

This second line of thought represented a distinct shift in anthropological observation. The view of the previous generation can be summed up through the journals of prominent explorer Captain James Cook, who observed the 'heathen' as incapable of avarice, having no desire for personal development; and, even supposing he could be made to understand the Christian message, would be unable to make use of it personally.¹³⁴ This view appeared prevalent and was particularly true of the African. The absence of a significant body of literature and seeming lack of an educational system probably contributed to this view.¹³⁵

The development of the ideal of equality as a human right brought challenge to this assumption. This ideal, as expressed in the anti-slavery campaign, initially began as a Quaker led movement, but found its significant leaders in Thomas Clarkson and William Wilberforce. Clarkson's early paper on slavery discussed the question *Anne liceat invitos in servitutem dare* (Is it lawful to enslave the unconsenting?)¹³⁶ Clarkson immersed himself in the question engaging directly with those who had experienced slavery whilst internally dialoguing the question in his own mind. He came to the assumption that if his essay, which had argued against slavery, was correct then it was time that this extended beyond conversation and became action. Joining a small body of men already working toward this aim, they began petitioning Members of Parliament and other influential members of society.

¹³⁴ Delavan Leonard Pierson, *The Pacific Islanders: From Savages to Saints*, 16

¹³⁵ Nicholas Hudson, 'From "Nation" to "Race": The Origin of Racial Classification in Eighteenth-Century Thought', *Eighteenth-Century Studies* Vol. 29, No. 3 (Spring, 1996), 249f

¹³⁶ Thomas Clarkson, *An Essay on the Slavery and Commerce of the Human Species*, 1788

William Wilberforce became the Member of Parliament that provided a recognised political voice to the campaign. He had raised the question of the slave trade prior to his connection with Clarkson *et al.* As the campaign developed and became organised, Wilberforce became its recognised voice. This was a natural progression as a number of the initial twelve members of the 'Committee for the abolition of the slave trade' were Quakers and unable to sit in Parliament. Wilberforce was seen as a rising star and although considered too young to become a member of Pitt's cabinet following his becoming Prime Minister, Wilberforce was nevertheless close to Pitt. There is some evidence that Wilberforce received encouragement from Pitt himself in the abolition movement until the resumption of the French wars made this a political impossibility.¹³⁷

With the exception of the Evangelical revival all of the above can be summarized in the term *Zeitgeist* or roughly 'spirit of the age'. The enlightenment affected everything and religion was not free from its effect. Bosch makes the assessment that 'the entire western missionary movement of the past three centuries emerged from the matrix of the enlightenment'.¹³⁸ As we transition into a direct examination of the Northamptonshire Baptist Association, Carey and the emergence of British Protestant Mission, detecting the influence of this 'spirit' will be important.

¹³⁷ Sir Reginald Coupland, *Wilberforce: A Narrative*, 98

¹³⁸ *Op Cit*, 344

Chapter Three

The worldview of the Northamptonshire Baptist Association

(An examination of how this Association of Pastors, many of whom had a close relationship and considerable influence upon Carey, understood the world around them and how this in turn shaped their missiology.)

The process completed in Chapter 3 allows us to examine both the Northamptonshire Baptist Association and William Carey in their historical context.¹³⁹ Having drawn out key elements of late 18th century, as well as theological developments driven by key theologians, we are able to examine their worldview and their intention to move toward praxis. This intended praxis can be examined by investigating how they answered four important questions. ‘Who are we?’, ‘Where are we?’ ‘What is wrong with the world?’ and ‘What should be done about it?’¹⁴⁰

When attempting to shape the worldview of the Northamptonshire Baptist Association we are presented with a narrative/story that encompasses the conservative Christian meta-narrative of God and creation that, in turn, is followed by fall and redemption. However this narrative and their understanding of its outworking had been impacted by four distinct influences in recent history, each of which were examined in the previous chapter. Firstly, the theological questioning of hyper-Calvinism that had potentially softened objections to mission praxis. Secondly, the Act of Toleration which, whilst halting the persecution of Dissenting groups, had failed to provide the level playing field that

¹³⁹ As Carey and the prominent pastors of the Northamptonshire Baptist Association shared a two-way relationship in which each was influenced and influencing I have chosen to examine first the Northamptonshire Baptist Association and secondly Carey himself. This decision was formulated on the premise that Carey joined an established group to whom he initially consider himself subservient. This is emphasised by the previously quoted interchange between Carey and John Ryland Sr. As Carey’s reputation and knowledge grew and he became more assured of his own position this relationship became more balanced and, increasingly, Carey was able to influence as well as be influenced.

¹⁴⁰ In using the term ‘worldview’ I am borrowing from N.T. Wright’s use of the term in his Christian Origins series. This methodology is extensively outlined in *The New Testament and the People of God*, 132ff and *Jesus and the Victory of God*, 137ff. It describes worldview as both the story or narrative a group uses to explain its existence, the symbols that define it to people outside the group and how it answers certain questions about itself. In shaping Carey’s understanding of worldview I have assumed his general acceptance of the worldview presented by the Northamptonshire Baptist Association except on points that he challenged it or changed it.

had been hoped for. Thirdly, the political revolutions of America and France, which had given rise to the hope that political equality and civil liberty may be possible in the future. Finally, the social changes, which were developing the belief that human beings shared inherent qualities and were, therefore, entitled to certain rights by nature of birth.

I would suggest that Particular Baptists in general maintained symbols of their narrative in the following symbols; bible, baptism and building. They were distinctly 'people of the book' and would maintain the inerrancy of scripture and its authority over and above the traditions of man, reason and experience. Andrew Fuller gave expression to this belief when he observed that 'another cause of declension ... is making the religion of others our standard instead of the word of God'.¹⁴¹ The encroachment of the enlightenment upon religion was beginning to weaken this position amongst some theologians. Fuller records his disapproval of a Mr Ball who appeals to 'the unerring oracles of true philosophy and the word of God'.¹⁴² To Fuller the authority of scripture was without question. Whilst the nature of scripture as revelation was maintained as central to both Baptist theology and praxis, there was a growing belief that Christianity was reasonable and could be presented as such. This was represented in, what Stanley terms, the growing belief that rational knowledge was regenerative when linked to Christian proclamation.¹⁴³

The Northamptonshire Baptist Association expressed this belief in the bible as authoritative and revelatory through the secondary symbol of Baptism. The prominence of paedobaptism within the Church of England provided ample demonstration of human tradition taking the place of Christian scripture. The baptism of adults following personal confession was, therefore, an important symbol of 'bible' and also an important symbol in its own right. This stance was made problematic because of the connection between child baptism and citizenship. Baptism within the Church of England remained as closely connected to allegiance to the crown and political order as it did to a religious faith. To refuse baptism was to break ties with the state and essentially to remove

¹⁴¹ Andrew Fuller, *Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation*, 3.321

¹⁴² Paul Brewster, *Andrew Fuller, Model Pastor – Theologian*, 48

¹⁴³ Brian Stanley, *Christian Missions and the Enlightenment*, 8

yourself from its control. This made baptism political, even when it wasn't intended to be. Andrew Fuller epitomises the general Particular Baptist view as expressed in his earliest encounter with adult baptism. His memoir recollects, 'being considerable effected by what I saw and heard ... I was fully persuaded that this was the primitive way of baptising, and that every Christian was bound to attend to the institution of our blessed Lord'.¹⁴⁴

Finally 'building' was a distinct way of Particular Baptist identity. Although the Particular Baptists had first appeared as an offspring of English Separatists, Hugh Warple has recognised the slow evolutionary approach of the Particular Baptist's in comparison to the 'radical' separation of the General Baptists.¹⁴⁵ In spite of this process of evolution, as opposed to schism, they continued a separatist approach to freedom of religion and maintained a location outside of the established church. Whilst 'building' can be seen as a symbol in itself, I would suggest that the significance was not so much where they **did** meet as where they **did not** meet. The importance of the parish church as a building within the community made any construction of another building a challenge. Historically a removal from the local church had been a prominent part of religious revival as seen in the ministry of John Wesley. By placing themselves outside of the established church they had symbolised their removal not only from what they understood to be the unscriptural doctrines of the state church but also, in many respects, from the state itself. The importance of 'building' is visible in the closed nature of communion within the association and amongst a younger generation of pastors in general. Increasingly where you attended was important in recognising a conversion experience and whilst a certain lifestyle confirmed this status, 'baptism' and 'building' were the dominating identifier.

As the beginning of the Particular Baptist narrative overlaps with the general conservative Christian narrative it is to be expected, in turning towards 'questions', that there will also be some overlap in answers. Each question has different nuances depending on the level at which it is asked. When asking 'Who

¹⁴⁴ Andrew Fuller, *Letter to an unknown friend*, Jan 1815 in John Ryland, *The work of faith, the labour of love and the patience of hope illustrated; in the life and death of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, 22

¹⁴⁵ H. Warple, 'Inter-Relations of Seventeenth Century English Baptists', *Review & Expositor* July 1957 54: 407ff

are we?’ and ‘Where are we?’ then the answer, on a primary level, was no different to the answer that would have been given by any church of the late 18th century or indeed of any century. Firstly they were Christians. The motif from Hebrews 12 of Christians as pilgrims connects well with the Particular Baptist’s of the late 18th century. Part of a small group of ‘chosen’ or ‘called out’, they represent their God to/against the world around them and are, in essence, strangers in the world and recognise another home. This allusion ties in well with the symbol of ‘building’ examined above. As dissenters they were largely underprivileged, ignored or despised.

The question ‘What is wrong?’ divides comfortably into two parts. It had both national and international implications. The initial focus must be on ‘local problems’ and could be phrased ‘What is wrong within England?’ For the Particular Baptists, and many other dissenters, the most obvious problem would remain the lack of religious freedom. Whilst the on going persecution of dissenters had been tempered somewhat by the Toleration Act, which had created some religious freedom by allowing Dissenting groups to meet for worship, this had only removed direct persecution; it had not ended oppression. The Test and Corporation Act of 1673, as well as making it necessary for Dissenting ministers to sign an agreement with the doctrines of the church of England, also made it impossible for a dissenter to hold public office.¹⁴⁶ This created a situation where the lack of religious freedom created and upheld a lack of political freedom. This lack of political freedom was part of a greater dissatisfaction with the political system for many of the nation’s poorer people, a demographic that the Dissenting groups historically attracted¹⁴⁷.

In addition to dissatisfaction regarding political and religious freedom there was an increasing dissatisfaction regarding wider, less personal, issues such as slavery and the persecution of Catholics. This dissatisfaction was linked to the growing body of literature dedicated to the ‘rights of man’. Whilst there was much to be said about this topic during the American Revolution, particularly through the Declaration of Independence and the following Constitution of the

¹⁴⁶ *Abstract of the Test and Corporations Act*, 4

¹⁴⁷ Joseph Priestley outlined the Dissenting opinion on Freedom in his *An essay on the first principles of government: and on the nature of Religious, Political and Civil Liberty*.

United States of America, it has been questioned whether it necessarily led to action. Woodcock observes that it is difficult to defend the application of this statement when one man could still own another.¹⁴⁸

Political opponents often linked this egalitarian principle to republican tendencies. This was not always a fair assessment of the political goals of proponents of the anti-slavery campaign or other reform movements. However revolution and democracy were becoming pejorative words, partly because authors who had some connection to revolution, whether this was simply an ideological connection or a practical one, generally encouraged the above principles.¹⁴⁹ Rousseau's *Social Contract* was seen as a starting point for the principles behind the revolution as well as promoting the egalitarian principle. The French National Assembly's *Declaration of the Rights of Man*, which followed the Revolution of 1789 and was the basis for the French Constitution, included the inherent rights that 'all men are created free' and entitled to 'liberty, property, security and the freedom from oppression'.¹⁵⁰

When examining the second half of the question 'what is wrong?' which could be termed 'what is wrong abroad?' two important points were increasingly apparent. Firstly, Christianity could not be described as prevalent across the world and, secondly, the rest of world was denied or lacked the civilisation that the European continent enjoyed. Whilst debate continued as to whether Christianity or civilisation would/should come first the immediate praxis was prayer. This is evidenced by the 1784 call to prayer referenced in Chapter Two. This assessment of the global state of religious persuasion was not necessarily an academic one but more of a growing awareness that something needed to be done. In spite of the strong British presence in Asia and Africa for much of the previous 150 years there was a realisation that little had been done to improve the conditions, either religious or civil, of the native peoples. This may have partially centred on the pre-enlightenment view that religious improvement was

¹⁴⁸ George Woodcock 'The Meaning of the Revolution in Britain', Ed Crossely (Ed.), *The French Revolution and British Culture*, 5

¹⁴⁹ Reginald Coupland, *Wilberforce: A Narrative*, 98

¹⁵⁰ French National Assembly, *The Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen*

impossible. During the late 18th century this view began to come into crisis when challenged by the egalitarian principle mentioned above.

When turning to our final question ‘what should be done?’ there were also national and international implications. Firstly there were repeated requests for a repeal of the Tests and Corporations Act in order to bring relief to all protestant Dissenters. Although these appeals had repeatedly been defeated in parliament the debate continued and was assisted by prominent Evangelical Christians holding position within parliament. The Act for the Relief of Protestant Dissenters 1779 was passed and removed the necessity of Dissenting ministers agreeing with the 39 articles. However the clause demanding the signing of a declaration, whilst happily tolerated by some, remained a burden of conscience to others.

Political freedom was a far more controversial topic because there was such a range of responses. Whilst in the wider Dissenting groups there were those like Richard Price and Joseph Priestley who understood that a complete change of order was required and showed unequivocal support for the French revolutionists, the Northamptonshire Baptist Association members covered a greater spectrum of opinions. As observed in Chapter Two, Andrew Fuller demonstrates the conservative position whilst J.C. Ryland represented the opposing end of the spectrum. The examination of the wider 18th century context in Chapter Two demonstrated that his situation was in a distinct state of flux from 1789 through to the 1794 Terror.

The problem of slavery met with ubiquitous opposition amongst Baptists and was only made problematic by the connection between the increasingly political ‘rights of man’ and the principle of ‘equality’. There was general approval and involvement with the anti slavery movement from the beginning. This support evidenced itself in a range of responses, from practical support through signing petitions and sugar fasts but also through sermons. Brian Stanley analyses two sermons, one delivered by Robert Robinson at Stoneyard Baptist Church, Cambridge on 10.2.1788, from the text Luke 4:18, and the second delivered by Abraham Booth to the Particular Baptist congregation at Little Prescott Street,

Goodman's Fields, in London on 29.1.1792, from the text Exodus 21:16.¹⁵¹ Both addresses are deliberate in their demonstration of the incompatibility of slavery with Christianity. Robinson expresses it thus:

‘The doctrines and the ceremonies of Christianity attack injustice and cruelty in their strong holds, depraved passions, and consequently if a slave trade be the effect of such passions our religion goes to subvert the whole system of slavery. Feel its influence, and the work is done.’¹⁵²

In a similar manner Booth will declare his hope that ‘that the slavery of innocent persons may cease to exist, and sink under the detestation of all Europe’.¹⁵³

Stanley is careful to inform us that these are not unique or even unusual examples; they express a general Baptist approach to equality as it regarded the slave trade.¹⁵⁴

Regarding Robinson's rhetoric, Stanley observes the combination of anti-slavery sentiment with radical political language. Robinson references Isaiah 61:1, ‘I have come to bring liberty to the captives’. Robinson expresses dismay over the condition of the historical Jewish people in Babylon and bemoans ‘free citizens reduced to slavery’.¹⁵⁵ It is this language that Stanley links to radical politics. Examples like this led to the, sometimes reasonable, impression that dissent and revolution went hand in hand. A subtle development of this thought was that all dissenters were revolutionaries because all dissenters were interested in equality.¹⁵⁶ This offers further demonstration of the complexity of decision regarding potential praxis facing Particular Baptists and the Northamptonshire Baptist Association, potentially delaying a positive answer to the question ‘what should be done?’

¹⁵¹ Brian Stanley, ‘Baptists, Anti-Slavery and the Legacy of Imperialism’, *Baptist Quarterly*, Volume 42 pages 284-296, 284

¹⁵² *Ibid*, 285

¹⁵³ *Ibid*, 286

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid*, 287

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid*

¹⁵⁶ T. Hunt, *Defining John Bull: Political Caricature and National Identity in Late Georgian England*, 117

As the 18th century came to a close Particular Baptists and particularly those in Northampton were becoming aware of a need for an additional step to be taken. They were deeply aware of the need for something to be done in response to the above worldview. They had recognised that something was wrong both at home and abroad. Into this situation William Carey increasingly pushed the question of missionary enterprise making use of the theological developments of Andrew Fuller and others. Informed by the numerous influencing factors of the enlightenment, Carey would push for missionary praxis and so change the above worldview in a distinctive way.

Chapter 4

William Carey and the development of his values

(This chapter examines William Carey's years in England. Following brief references to his early life, it focuses primarily on what I have termed his 'developmental years', from his joining a congregational church to the commencement of his missionary enterprise on 13 June 1793. This section includes a detailed examination of his *Enquiry into the Obligations upon Christians to use Means for the conversion of the Heathen*. This examination will focus on the circumstances preceding its writing, its contents, its context, and its deeper implications. It concludes by examining the influence of the *Enquiry* on the Northamptonshire Baptist Association and the forming of the Particular Baptist Society for the Propagation of the Gospel to the Heathen (BMS))

Early Life

As observed in the introduction, William Carey was not a dissenter by birth. He was born in to the house of a weaver-turned-Church of England schoolmaster.¹⁵⁷ Eustace Carey's family were naturally loyalist, their fortunes being somewhat tied to the state and its church. Whilst by no means lavish, his father's position had provided sufficient income and free education to his family.¹⁵⁸ By his own confession Carey was not a gifted student. He often found his attention wandering. He was born with a love for the outdoors but was unable to pursue an apprenticeship in this area due to illness. His father managed to secure him an apprenticeship with a shoemaker in a nearby village.

This transition would be important for Carey developmentally. Removal to the village of Hackleton as apprentice to Clarke Nicholls brought him into contact with dissenter John Warr.¹⁵⁹ Warr was part of a rich Dissenting tradition; his grandfather had founded the independent meetinghouses at Hackleton. John Warr was the first to present Carey with the arguments in favour of dissent. At this point Carey's upbringing had led him to assume a position of staunch defence of the established Church. Carey recollects that he often emerged victorious from debates with Warr.¹⁶⁰ Hindsight, however, convinced him that whilst he may have argued the better, Warr had the better argument.

¹⁵⁷ M. Drewery, *William Carey*, 8

¹⁵⁸ William Carey, *Letter to A. Fuller, August 4th 1804* in E. Carey, *Memoir of William Carey*, 4

¹⁵⁹ Drewery, 18

¹⁶⁰ William Carey, *Letter to A. Fuller, August 4th 1804* in E. Carey, *Memoir of William Carey*, 4

Recognition of this fact led Carey into an important period of reflection on the scriptural merits of dissent over establishment. This period would be vastly important for his later mission praxis of bible translation as it provided his first encounter with Greek and Hebrew languages. It provided him with the basis for translation work from the original languages. The knowledge it gave him also reinforced his choice of an independent Dissenting church over Church of England.

This decision came with consequences. As observed in Chapter Three, a move from the Church of England to a Dissenting body was a move from inside to outside. Although Carey's relative insignificance meant that he had no outstanding prospects for social or political advancement, leaving the Church of England made a person ineligible for parliament and prevented one's children from attending a Church of England school. Carey had recognised the privilege his sisters experienced in receiving an education denied to most female children of the late 18th century. This had only been possible because of his family's connection with the Church of England. On an entirely pragmatic level this made dissent a difficult decision.

His decision also carried with it a political implication. Dissenters carried with them the taint of Revolution. The year 1776 saw the rise of the American conflict. Amongst Dissenting bodies there was already sympathy for the American colonists. This sympathy can be traced to the similarity of persecution suffered by the two groups. Religious persecution had been instrumental in encouraging the first British settlers to leave for the American continent. Among those leaving were many of Dissenting traditions. In the midst of the American Revolution Benjamin Franklin claimed that 'the dissenters are all for us'.¹⁶¹ Whilst this was certainly not true, Van den Berg makes a fair assessment when he connects Dissenting ministers with republican political thought.¹⁶² It is therefore highly probable that connection to local Dissenting meetinghouses brought him into contact with people holding those political views. The practice of sharing literature that Baptist churches followed would have meant that Carey was

¹⁶¹ Raymond Brown, *English Baptists of the 18th Century*, 132

¹⁶² Van den Berg, *Constrained by Jesus Love*, 112

certainly aware of what others were writing on the subject, and the level of support it was gaining, both amongst Baptists and other Dissenting groups at large.¹⁶³

The ‘*Enquiry*’, the circumstances of its writing, its contents, context and deeper implications

The combination of Carey’s increasing prominence within Particular Baptist circles and his short period of school teaching in Moulton are important as they led to the initial development of Carey’s only significant work written in England, *An Enquiry into the Obligations upon Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathen, in Which the Religious State of the Different Nations of the World, the Success of Former Undertakings and the Practicality of Further Undertakings are Considered*. His initial mapping of the religious state of the world caught the attention of Andrew Fuller, who began to promote Carey and his work amongst the other Pastors of the Northamptonshire Baptist Association.

The main focus of the *Enquiry* was to instigate a shift in the worldview of Christians in general but particularly those closest to him. In writing the *Enquiry*, past experiences must have informed Carey that, whilst he had allies in people such as Fuller, he would face opposition. It was a negative assessment concerning the necessity of missionary activity that led to J. Ryland Snr rebuking Carey for his missionary aspirations. E. Carey reports a meeting of the Northamptonshire Baptist Association at which Carey suggested the subject of Christian ‘duty to carry the gospel to heathen lands’ for discussion.¹⁶⁴ Ryland reportedly labeled Carey ‘a miserable enthusiast’. E. Carey’s source was one John Sutcliff a prominent member of the Association and a life long friend of Carey’s. Whilst Ryland’s son questioned the accuracy of the report, and Carey never mentioned the interchange in any correspondence, E. Carey believed it carried sufficient support to include within his biography. Regardless of its semi apocryphal nature, the narrative is suggestive-if not conclusive-of the hyper-Calvinist position maintained by many, if not Ryland himself, and the counter position held by Carey, Fuller *et al.*

¹⁶³ Raymond Brown, *English Baptists of the 18th Century*, 118

¹⁶⁴ Eustace Carey, *A Memoir of William Carey D.D.*, 35

Given D.W. Bebbington's previously cited observation of a distinct biblicism in Evangelical circles, it is unsurprising that Carey's introduction to his *Enquiry* provides a biblical foundation for missionary activity through a brief exposition of the great commission.¹⁶⁵ Bosch's contention is that this usage marks the rise to prominence of Matthew 28:19-20 as a missionary text.¹⁶⁶ Carey follows this by opening his *Enquiry* proper by examining the objections to missionary activity that he has encountered. This connects a worldview dominated by scripture with a modernist approach where faith is reasonable.¹⁶⁷ Initially we will examine these rebuttals solely as they relate to missional activity directly. Later we will examine other more subtle implications within the text. Carey recognises objections regarding the extent of the great commission's imperative. Whilst willing to accept its binding nature on the Apostles, certain theologians had apparently asserted that even divine commissions could be limited or even overturned. Carey's claimed that any such argument would also provide a similar injunction against baptism. As Carey's initial target audience must be considered to be his own Baptist Association, this counter argument is particularly important. Whilst all denominations, except Quakers, practised some form of baptism, it held a distinct place in Baptist theology and praxis. As Chapter Three (The Worldview of the Northamptonshire Baptist Association) outlines, the Particular Baptist focus on baptism as a symbol that emphasised their distinct story makes this a particularly well-placed blow.

Carey's second section provides a short review of the history of previous missionary attempts. He appears particularly careful to demonstrate a link between the age of the Apostles and the subsequent early church fathers. He invokes Justin Martyr's declaration that 'there was no part of mankind ... (that had not heard) the name of Jesus Christ'.¹⁶⁸ Carey argues that just as the divine injunction demanded the Apostles reach their known world so it applied

¹⁶⁵ William Carey, *Enquiry in the obligations upon Christians to use means for the Conversion of the heathen in which the religious state of the different nations, the success of former undertakings, and the practicality of further undertakings, are considered*, 6

¹⁶⁶ David Bosch, *Transforming mission*, 56f

¹⁶⁷ William Carey, *Enquiry ...* 1792, 8-13

¹⁶⁸ William Carey, *Enquiry*, 29

likewise to his generation.¹⁶⁹ His reference to several important missionary attempts, including Eliot and Brainerd to the Native Americans, the Danish settlement at Tranquebar and the Moravians demonstrates Carey's awareness that he was reacting not only to scripture but to mission praxis already taking place.¹⁷⁰

Stanley's observation,¹⁷¹ that Carey's *Enquiry* harnessed the theological power of Fuller's work (and from this was able to deduce that the great commission was binding for Dissenting Christians in the late 18th Century in the same way it was for the apostles in the mid 1st Century),¹⁷² is an important recognition of the contribution made to the modern missionary movement by Fuller and those that influenced him. As observed in Chapter Two, Fuller was strongly influenced by Edwards and in turn influenced Carey. Stanley's assessment allows us to recognise the unoriginal nature of the *Enquiry* within Carey's immediate circle. This is particularly true as regards the opening two sections. Much of the theology was borrowed and so the theory was not particularly controversial. The *Enquiry's* originality lay in its final two sections.

Section three provides a scientific examination of the religious state of the world. Brown observes that this particular method of data presentation in relation to religious demographics was becoming increasingly common in the 18th Century¹⁷³ that led to the increasing awareness of religious demographics referenced in Chapter Three. It was no doubt especially persuasive. As with Carey's handling of objections in section one, the scientific style presentation of data demonstrates a reliance on evidence and Carey was convinced that these figures must 'strike every considerate mind'.¹⁷⁴

An important step toward missionary expansion was Carey's disagreement with the anthropomorphic conclusions Cook drew following his exploitative trips to the south seas. Accounts of these trips were published in the *Northampton*

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid*

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid*, 36f

¹⁷¹ See page 19

¹⁷² Brian Stanley, *The Bible and the Flag*, 60

¹⁷³ *Op Cit*, 118

¹⁷⁴ W. Carey, *An Enquiry ...* 1961, 88

Mercury and provided Carey with material with which to meet objections to mission. Those who suggested that the 'pagan' nations were unreachable logistically had only to look at Cook's expedition for evidence that this was not the case. However, whereas Cook had drawn the conclusion that propagation of the Christian faith amongst those nations was impossible and would 'never be undertaken',¹⁷⁵ Carey reached a different conclusion.

Carey took a particularly high view of the abilities of 'the heathen'. He accepted the reports of human sacrifice and observed that they were 'as destitute of civilisation as they (were) of true religion'.¹⁷⁶ However, he suggested that they 'appear to be as capable of knowledge as (western people) are' and that many of the incidents were probably the result of cultural miscommunication.¹⁷⁷ Stanley states that rejection of the enlightenment's optimistic view of humanity (because of the Calvinistic doctrine of total depravity), did not demand rejection of all enlightenment principles or suggest that societies could not be classified or that progress was not possible.¹⁷⁸

In the fourth section Carey moves from arguments in favour of mission to examining potential mission praxis. It is a remarkable aspect of the *Enquiry* that it contains so little mission structure. Whilst Carey was firmly convinced missionary activity should be attempted, he appeared generally open-minded with regards to praxis. He suggested that two married missionaries should initially be sent, along with their wives as means of managing the household. His only demand was that they 'mingle with the people'. Learning the native language was encouraged to be their first business in order to 'cultivate a friendship with them'.¹⁷⁹

The mission theology and praxis Carey outlined were simple. His starting point was based in Matthew 28:20. He recognised the demands of Jesus upon his apostles and additionally affirmed that this demand remained binding to all future generations unless evidence appears to the contrary. Having provided

¹⁷⁵ Delavan Leonard Pierson, *The Pacific Islanders: From Savages to Saints*, 16

¹⁷⁶ William Carey, *Enquiry ...* 1792, 63

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid*

¹⁷⁸ Brian Stanley, *Christian Missions and the Enlightenment*, 9

¹⁷⁹ William Carey, *Enquiry*, 75

rebuttal to the objections he had encountered, he laid out a mission theology based upon the need of salvation. This propagation of the gospel would bring about both the Christianisation and the Civilisation of India. The praxis is relational. Missionaries were required to build relationships based on friendship with the natives in order to present the message.

Brian Stanley draws out five important prepositions of Carey's mission theology.¹⁸⁰ Firstly, non-western people were heathens, lost in degradation and sin. Secondly, their native religions were without the presence of God and therefore idolatrous or at best superstitious. These first two prepositions have a basis firmly in the reformation. Thirdly, they believed in the superiority and liberating ability of western civilisation. On prima facie evidence they believed that they were taking the gospel. Whilst this placed a focus on the 'Christianisation' of India it also contributed towards the 'Civilisation' of India although the debate around which of the two came first would become an important aspect of mission theology. Fourthly, they believed that rational knowledge brought regeneration of any country so long as it was linked to Christian proclamation. Finally they carried an assumption that the Christian message was an individual thing. Stanley postulates that the final two prepositions have their roots planted firmly in enlightenment thought. These prepositions will become important when examining how Carey's mission praxis developed in terms of education, social justice and national regeneration.

Whilst the primary purpose of the enquiry is to demand missionary activity that instils both Christianity and Civilisation within the countries it reaches, there are several important nuances that can be detected in and around the *Enquiry*. As observed during the literature review in Chapter One, E. Payne has done important work in recognising that the publishers who helped to launch Carey's pamphlet were of 'radical political and religious sympathies'.¹⁸¹ As we have demonstrated there were many within the Dissenting communities that supported a radical or republican approach to politics. As Richard Jones and Anthony Wesson recognise they were attempting to 'achieve a more credible

¹⁸⁰ Brian Stanley, *Christian Missions and the Enlightenment*, 8

¹⁸¹ E. Payne, Introduction to *An Enquiry into the obligation upon Christians to use means for the propagation of the gospel* (1961), 13-16

Christian presence in the world'.¹⁸² It is important that this is examined more closely regarding Carey particularly. Carey's first missionary colleague, John Fountain, would later cause no small amount of controversy through his writing of politically charged letters to England, so much that Andrew Fuller would find it necessary to temper this political fire.¹⁸³ Fuller recalled Carey's radical political views in a letter to Fountain several years into Carey's India experience suggesting, 'Carey's mind was much engaged in these things'.¹⁸⁴ The objections to political involvement were often based around a need for prudence as opposed to politics for its own sake. Brewster recognises this as Andrew Fullers' primary concern in the above exchange of letters.¹⁸⁵ He was concerned that politically charged rhetoric would lead authorities to assume that revolution and not evangelism was the main goal of the Baptist Missionary Society

T.V. Phillip suggests this connection was not uncommon and that for many missionary minded people Rousseau's ideas of equality and sovereignty of the people provided an excellent counter argument to the generally low view of the 'other' demonstrated by Cook *et al.*¹⁸⁶ S.P Carey's assessment of Carey's programme of worldwide mission is that it was Rousseau 'made practical'.¹⁸⁷ These links, especially the first hand recollection of Andrew Fuller, one of Carey's closest colleagues, provide more than circumstantial evidence of a connection between Carey and republican sentiments and the evidence is strong enough that A. Christopher Smith can refer to Carey as a 'dissenter who had recently displayed republican tendencies'.¹⁸⁸ These conclusions certainly warrant an examination for traces of republican undertones in his *Enquiry*.¹⁸⁹

In section five of the *Enquiry* Carey suggests 'a glorious door is opened, and is likely to be opened wider and wider, by the spread of civil liberty'.¹⁹⁰ Scholarship

¹⁸² R. G. Jones and A. J. Wesson, *Towards a Radical Church*, 21

¹⁸³ Andrew Fuller, *Letter to J Fountain*, September 7, 1797 cited in P Brewster, *Andrew Fuller, Model Pastor-Theologian*, 142

¹⁸⁴ S.P Carey, *William Carey ...*, 7

¹⁸⁵ P Brewster, *Andrew Fuller, Model Pastor-Theologian*, 142

¹⁸⁶ T.V. Phillip, *Edinburgh to Salvador: Twentieth Century Ecumenical Missiology (Electronic)*

¹⁸⁷ S.P. Carey, *William Carey ...*, 7f

¹⁸⁸ A. Christopher Smith, 'The Legacy of William Carey', *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, Jan 92, Vol. 16 Issue 1, p2, 7p

¹⁸⁹ S.P. Carey, *William Carey ...*, 7f

¹⁹⁰ William Carey, *Enquiry ... 1961*, 105

has provided some contention as to the meaning behind this idea. Jeffery Cox suggests that it refers to the spread of the British Empire which, through increasingly safe passage across large areas of the globe, was making missionary activity possible.¹⁹¹ Others have claimed that the French Revolution provides a more likely reference point.¹⁹² The 'diminution of the spirit of popery'¹⁹³ would appear to tie in well with this second viewpoint as the French Revolution had provided a blow to Catholic authority in France and beyond. The reference to civil liberty appears too close to radical political language to endorse the view that Carey was referring to the British Empire.

The *Enquiry* is far less circumspect in its commitment to equality. Carey provides two important critics of the slave trade within his text. He notes 'the noble effort ... to abolish the inhuman slave trade'.¹⁹⁴ He and his family along with many other dissenters had demonstrated their opposition by refusing to use West Indian sugar 'on account of the iniquitous manner in which it is obtained'.¹⁹⁵ Whilst support of the anti-slavery campaign could provide further evidence of republican tendencies, the two are by no means synonymous. Both Thomas Clarkson and James Stephen developed strong sympathies with French and American republicans, respectively; however, the same was not true of William Wilberforce.

The references to the anti-slavery campaigns demonstrate Carey's personal commitment to a cause that we demonstrated to be generally supported by Particular Baptists and should make us aware of the potential for a social element to Carey's mission praxis. Whilst the general tone of the *Enquiry* has a distinct focus on individual conversion as a response to a distinctly evangelistic message, the social element should not be understated. We should be prepared to observe some elements of campaigns such as the anti-slavery campaign in the overarching purpose of Carey's mission praxis.

¹⁹¹ Cox, *The British Missionary Enterprise since 1700*, 14

¹⁹² This view is expressed in S.P. Carey, William Carey and Raymond Brown, *English Baptists of the 18th Century* et al

¹⁹³ William Carey, *Enquiry*, 79

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid*, 79

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid*, 86

Given the strong focus on mission theology and praxis in the *Enquiry*, it is easy, upon first reading, to miss additional theological references within the text. When handling potential objections to mission in section one, Carey makes reference to objections based on eschatological arguments. He reports that some learned divines believe the ‘witnesses must be slain’¹⁹⁶ before the ‘heathen’ can be converted. He questions this doctrine based on Jonathan Edwards *Humble Attempt*, examined in Chapter Two (Contextualising Carey). As stated, Edwards worked from a post-millennial position suggesting that the second coming of Christ would follow a millennium of Christian advancement.¹⁹⁷ This passage links Carey directly to a theological view that would become the dominant missional eschatology of the 18th and early 19th Century, as opposed to the pre-millennial view that would dominate 20th century mission based around Matthew 24. This theological shift means modern readers can often miss the implications of post-millennial theology when studying Carey.

Influence upon the worldview of the Northamptonshire Baptist Association.

(An examination of the manner in which the *Enquiry* reshaped the worldview Northamptonshire Baptist Association and the Baptist Missionary Society, their mission theory and their intentions toward mission praxis.)

There is no evidence that Carey’s *Enquiry* sold in large numbers. In fact quite to the contrary, he offered the proceeds of any sales to support later mission work¹⁹⁸ but there is no record of any donations being made.¹⁹⁹ Despite poor sales the *Enquiry* was influential within the Northamptonshire Baptist Association as it provided the impetus for mission conversation. Certainly the change did not come as quickly as Carey would have hoped but the *Enquiry* was a catalyst for future conversations. The same group of ministers that had refused to discuss missional activity several years before were now open to the question.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid*, 11

¹⁹⁷ Edwards, *An Humble Attempt*, 285-288

¹⁹⁸ ‘Minutes of the Northamptonshire Association, Assembled at Nottingham, May 29, 30, 31, 1792’, *The Baptist Annual Register, for 1790, 1791, 1792, and Part of 1793*, ed. John Rippon, 419

¹⁹⁹ Ernest A Payne, Introduction to *An Enquiry into the Obligation upon Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathen* (1961), 23

On May 30th 1792 Carey had the opportunity to reinforce his argument. Preaching from Isaiah 54 on the subject *Enlarge the Place of thy Tent*, he challenged his fellow ministers to expect great things from God and attempt great things for God.²⁰⁰ This, along with Fuller's impassioned plea, was sufficient to bring about the founding of a missionary society. Whilst the sermon and resulting discussion were important, we can assess that the *Enquiry* was the catalyst behind the society's formation. Carey had recommended in his final section that a society be set up along denomination lines rather than ecumenically.²⁰¹ This was not because of a lack of ecumenical spirit on his part but simply a matter of pragmatics. He believed that a particular society would suffer fewer disputes. The choice of name; The Particular Baptist Society for the Propagation of the Gospel to the Heathen reflects this recommendation. With the founding of the Baptist Missionary Society²⁰² we can observe a change in the worldview of the ministers of the Northamptonshire Baptist Association. The changing response to the question 'What should be done?' reflects the most important shift in worldview. The hyper-Calvinism of the day recognised a problem but suggested only God could provide a solution and essentially limited praxis to prayer. Carey's *Enquiry* endorsed a paradigm shift in the response to this question. The solution became the gospel, no longer as what we could term a 'faithful waiting' for God's future action but as an act of 'obedient going' in reliance on God's future action.

These developments led to a far more involved praxis than the former worldview of the Northamptonshire Baptist Association as it involved sending out. Following Carey's recommendation that two missionaries should be sent as an initial attempt, John Thomas, a doctor who had attempted some missionary activity whilst previously in India, and Carey himself, were commissioned by the newly formed Baptist Missionary Society. They left Britain with the basic praxis, laid out in the *Enquiry*, to build friendships with the indigenous people and learn

²⁰⁰ *Periodical Accounts Relative to A Society Formed Among The Particular Baptists for Propagating the Gospel to the Heathen, No 1, 2f*

²⁰¹ William Carey, *Enquiry*, 85

²⁰² This name change occurred fairly early in the society's history, however a definite date cannot be ascertained. The society will be referred to as the Baptist Missionary Society throughout this thesis.

their language. The development of their praxis would be the result of their encounter with India and its people, coupled with their own preconceived theological, social and political ideas. Whilst the dominating focus of the *Enquiry* was in laying a framework for a theology of mission, the social and political principles are clear. The references to the anti-slavery movement aptly demonstrate Carey's endorsement of this principle. He was committed to the principle that men were created equal.

The ambiguous references to 'a glorious door' and the 'diminution of the spirit of popery' highlighted above do not provide a definite connection between Carey and republican principles; but, when coupled with the first hand accounts of Andrew Fuller and the links between Carey and a number of important radical figures in Leicester society they are enough to support a reading of the *Enquiry* that speaks favourably of the French Revolution. Given that the writing of the *Enquiry* took place during the restrained years of the Revolution, before the Terror of 1794, a supportive reading is all the more plausible. Carey endorsed aspects of the Revolution and just as his egalitarian values encouraged his support of the anti-slavery movement, his republican values allowed, at least potentially, for his support of the Revolution in some form.

Carey was able to shift the worldview of the Northamptonshire Baptist Association enough to create an opportunity for missionary enterprise. The values we have seen were not necessarily shared with his collaborators. Carey's 'glorious door' was open and he himself walked through it. His effect upon the worldview of the Association had made this possible. He left with a sparse mission theology that allowed considerable flexibility as it developed into praxis. The development was shaped by his theological traditions but also by his values. The Christianisation and civilisation of India was the aim but his values were of distinct importance as he developed his intentions and motivations.

Part Two

Chapter Five

Carey and Community

(Community is examined within William Carey's mission praxis, especially as reflected in his often ignored work in Debharta. It is investigated as an umbrella value that would provide a location for the demonstration of other values within his developing praxis.)

Community was one of the few essential parts of Carey's relatively underdeveloped mission praxis before leaving for India. With little knowledge of the task ahead, he suggested sending paired missionaries with a support team in place.²⁰³ Ideally they should be married and their family would tend livestock and keep the house. Missionary support teams would be responsible for hunting, fishing and developing the property.²⁰⁴ Carey recognised the challenge of the missionary enterprise and recognised that additional English speaking people would provide emotional as well as physical support.

Carey, as observed in the previous chapter, had based his intended praxis on two main pillars. Missionaries must firstly, learn indigenous languages and secondly, begin to build friendships with the indigenous people.²⁰⁵ He had no definite concept of the degradation experienced by much of the Indian sub-continent, although he had recognised that missionaries may offer significant contribution to social improvement as well as bringing Christianity itself. He had recognised the lack of sciences and civil government and had suggested that the missionaries would do much to effect and improve these, and also recognised that Christianisation and civilisation overlapped.²⁰⁶ In spite of these important recognitions the *Enquiry's* general scope did not allow for specifics, therefore Carey's offered guidelines that demanded relationship.

Community appears to have developed quickly as a necessity. Following an optimistic beginning, Carey soon found the venture increasingly unfavourable. The mercurial Thomas had overstated his knowledge of India and understated

²⁰³ William Carey, *Enquiry into the Obligation Upon Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathen*, 73f

²⁰⁴ *Ibid*, 74

²⁰⁵ *Ibid*

²⁰⁶ *Ibid*, 12

the cost of living.²⁰⁷ When he began practicing medicine in order to satisfy these debts, and began to demonstrate a more opulent lifestyle, division became evident. Carey's wife, Dorothy, complained of the city life Thomas enjoyed whilst the Careys went without bread.²⁰⁸

Carey's first missionary settlement was the result of necessity. He attempted to find employment with the botanical gardens, a position that would have allowed him to continue his missionary activities within Calcutta.²⁰⁹ This position would have suited his botanical abilities however on application he discovered that the position had been filled. This led to an important crossroads in both mission theology and praxis. An initial desire to head towards Burma (outside of the control of the, somewhat oppressive, East India Company, the organisation responsible for British rulership of India) was countered by Thomas' hope that he would maintain a close proximity. He learned of free land offered by the government in a rural area around 30 miles outside Calcutta, Debharta²¹⁰ and decided that he and his family would leave the social hub of English India and his partner, Thomas, and become missionary pioneers similar to the 'faith missionary of late Victorian times'.²¹¹

It is intriguing to consider the type of missionary Carey may have become in Calcutta. He would, much later, suggest that Calcutta's large English society created an unwelcome distraction to young missionaries and proposed an initial posting outside the city to avoid temptations to social ambition and pleasure.²¹² Perhaps he had felt the temptation himself. Certainly employment opportunities were more substantial in Calcutta, however Carey expressed a fear that an English Calcutta lifestyle negated the possibility of missionaries entering into a state of similarity to that of the people 'amongst whom they labour'.²¹³ His

²⁰⁷ A.C. Chute, *John Thomas, First Baptist Missionary to Bengal, 1757-1801*, 48

²⁰⁸ Eustace Carey, *Memoir of William Carey D.D., Nov 9th 1793*, 90

²⁰⁹ Eustace Carey, *Memoir ...*, 90

²¹⁰ *Ibid*, 98f

²¹¹ A. Christopher Smith, 'The Legacy of William Carey', *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*; Jan 92, Vol. 16 Issue 1, p4 (electronic)

²¹² BMS MSS, *Carey to Andrew Fuller*, 25.10.1809, Box 13

²¹³ BMS MSS, *Carey to John Sutcliff* 3.1.1794, Box 13

journal entry for the same period insists that a missionary must 'being like and living amongst, his people'.²¹⁴

Relocation to Debharta was perilous. The area was known for man-eating tigers and snakes, and the sparsely populated area was isolated. When Carey arrived with his wife, sister-in-law and children, he had nowhere to live and only the intervention of an EIC salt mine manager provided accommodation.²¹⁵ He brought with him a pundit, Ram Basu, a former convert of Thomas', who was given the remarkably tough remit of persuading families to move to the area to join the unorthodox Englishman who would form a new village. Perhaps more remarkably, he was successful.

According to Carey's biographer, George Smith, some three or four thousand natives began to settle around Carey's bamboo hut, perhaps for no better reason than the protection of the Englishman's gun.²¹⁶ Carey's early missionary journal expressed regret that he had failed to follow the plan he himself had endorsed in his *Enquiry*.²¹⁷ Now, following the *Enquiry's* simple praxis of the development of vernacular language and friendship based on equality, Carey had, in a few short months the making of a community. A community that he had a good chance of influencing directly, once his skill in the language increased. This plan was disrupted by an offer to manage an indigo plant; and as this provided a guaranteed income and a reunion with John Thomas, it proved too good to turn down.

There are differences of opinion regarding how successful Carey was during his aborted missionary enterprise in Debharta. Jeffery Cox suggests he was nearly destitute, surviving off wild fowl and that the letter from Thomas came just in time to save his family from starvation.²¹⁸ Others have suggested that, whilst there was no success as measured by conversions, Carey was at least surviving.²¹⁹ His correspondence is optimistic, he reports himself 'happy in his

²¹⁴ Eustace Carey, *Memoir*, Nov 9th 1793

²¹⁵ *Ibid*, 101

²¹⁶ George Smith, *The Life of William Carey D.D. Shoemaker and Missionary*, 85

²¹⁷ Carey Journal 15-16 Jan 1794, BMS MSS

²¹⁸ Jeffery Cox, *The British Missionary Enterprise since 1700*, 72

²¹⁹ George Smith, 85

undertaking' and finds his 'health was never better'. This optimism may be related to spiritual fulfilment rather than financial wellbeing. He also reports being 'attended ... with difficulties'.²²⁰

By all reports, Carey made no formal converts. He had perhaps done little more than survive but his experiences may have provided him sufficient encouragement to continue this enterprise. If we attribute his buoyant correspondence to spiritual fulfilment, it is the spiritual fulfilment of finally doing that which he intended to do when he left England. Regardless of the lack of conversion, he was beginning to gain a grasp of Bengali and was forming relationships with indigenous people. His removal was a source of pain to him probably due to the individual focus of his post-reformation message. He recognised the value of each person he spoke to and became emotionally attached very easily.

Whatever missionary achievements can or can't be connected to his time in Debharta, it allowed for evolution in mission praxis. Two primary sources highlight this development. The first, from Carey's journal dated 17.2.1795, describes his increasingly tense relationship with his wife. She accused him of 'putting (himself) on a level with the natives'.²²¹ This is revealing as it shows the difficulty even Carey's closest relation had in accepting his attitude toward indigenous people and the resulting ascetic lifestyle. He evidently made a genuine effort, demonstrated particularly at Debharta, to build close personal relationships with natives. As noted previously, Dorothy Carey has always been aware of the difference in lifestyle enjoyed by Thomas and his family. Carey's initial experiences in India confirmed his initial assessment that mission required a building of relationships based on equality.

The second source develops this line further. In correspondence with Andrew Fuller he outlined his evolving ideas for the future of the mission.²²² These ideas built upon his previously highlighted references to a support team. He suggests a development resembling the community style of the Moravians. This would not

²²⁰ *Ibid*, 86

²²¹ Eustace Carey, *Memoir*, 147

²²² BMS MSS, *Carey to Fuller* 16.11.1796, Box 13

only provide a secure community for the missionaries but also a community for those natives choosing to connect themselves to the mission. By establishing themselves on an agricultural farm base the community would become a haven in the event of native converts being rejected by the indigenous community. Most importantly Carey demanded that each person be considered equal.²²³

This community plan appears to reveal the influence of several historical movements the most explicit of which is the named Moravian influence. Carey's admiration for this missionary-minded organisation is obvious in his *Enquiry*. He terms them the most successful of all modern missionary attempts he has observed.²²⁴ Count Zinzendorf, who provided refuge to the stateless Bohemian people following a meeting with Christian David in 1722, instigated this Moravian mission, later known as Unitas Fratrum, and allowed those peoples space to create the settlement known as Herrnhut on his estate.²²⁵

The Herrnhut community developed and within a short period numbered around 300. Zinzendorf encountered a community lacking spiritual leadership and this, coupled with his own theological studies, led him to take upon himself the position of Bishop. Zinzendorf led the Moravians through a time of repentance and renewal, which his biographer, Spangenberg, links to two key dates.²²⁶ The first, 12.5.1727, consisted of a challenge from Zinzendorf to leave behind 'self love, self will, disobedience and free thinking' and embrace Christ and the Spirit. This was formalised by commitment to a covenant between Zinzendorf and the Moravians. The second, which followed a period of daily prayer beginning in July 1727, was a Pentecost type experience on 13.8.1727. The community reported a sense of the Holy Spirit as a response to the above covenant. These experiences prepared the Herrnhut community to take its place as one of the significant contributors to protestant foreign mission. Spangenberg suggests that the Moravian community would never have become what it was without this experience and the subsequent spiritual formations that resulted.²²⁷

²²³ *Ibid*

²²⁴ William Carey, *Enquiry*, 37

²²⁵ J.E. Hutton, *History of Moravian Missions*, 10

²²⁶ Augustus Spangenberg, *The Life of Count Zinzendorf*, 83-88

²²⁷ *Ibid*, 86

There are obvious parallels between Herrnhut and Carey's Debharta mission. In both cases a fractured community of people found refuge around a spiritual leader. There are also obvious contrasts, notably that Zinzendorf attracted people of his own faith and was able to provide direct spiritual guidance, whilst Carey found himself working with a group with an indigenous faith and was, during his time there, unable to offer any obvious spiritual direction. However, Carey's knowledge of *Unitas Fratrum*, alongside his references to them in his *Enquiry* and in the letter referenced above, suggest that his experience in Debharta and the development of community living as a workable missionary praxis, may have a Moravian influence.

Whilst the Herrnhut model is an important one, it is not sufficient in and of itself in attempting to understand Carey's reference to community living. Contrasts within the missiology suggest that additional contexts might be equally relevant in analysing his proposed praxis, especially as Zinzendorf's model was noticeable autocratic. There was also a significant difference between the economic condition of Zinzendorf and the Moravians themselves and their relationship carried implications of a feudal nature, something neither Carey's *Enquiry* nor his praxis in India appear to endorse.

The Particular Baptist understanding of the importance of scripture, shaped in Chapter Three, would place a natural emphasis on a New Testament church model. The model presented in Acts 2:42-47 which describes a social order in which a common fund exists from which is distributed to each as he has need.²²⁸ As with the Herrnhut model the New Testament model does contain overt authority structures that Carey does not appear to have in mind, and suggests that the importance placed on relationships grounded in equality that he outlines in his above correspondence possibly had additional influences. Whilst Acts 2:42-47 is referenced in church planting models today, there is a danger in

228 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. 43 Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. 44 All the believers were together and had everything in common. 45 They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. 46 Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, 47 praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people.

making this assumption regarding the late 18th century. Bosch's previously cited conclusion, regarding Matthew 28:19-20, is an example of how understanding of biblical passages can change.

The egalitarian spirit of the late 18th century coupled with increased interest in the rights of each individual meant that attempts at starting new communities based around such ideals were common. Although loosely based on works such as Plato's *Republic* and Thomas More's *Utopia*, events in America and France (See Chapter 2) provided further drive to these communities, which often originated from religious groups. The increasing prominence of, and public awareness regarding these groups, when coupled with the implications of post-millennial theology examined in Chapter Two (namely an expectation that the world would develop positively during an invisible millennial reign of Christ) make this potentially revealing of Carey's expectations of community living and the possibilities it entailed, and so require further investigation.

One such attempt at democratic and egalitarian utopia was Pantisocracy. Samuel Coleridge and Robert Southey had observed the French revolution and felt a resonance with its principles. As the current political climate in Britain seemed unfavourable, the two formed a plan to form a new society on a few acres of land in America. The initial citizenry, numbering around 8-12, would live as a community and provide a common income through farming.²²⁹ Striking amongst various statements made by Coleridge and Southey is Coleridge's hope that they may build 'the republic of God's own making'.²³⁰ The plan was never followed through as funding became an issue and Southey and Coleridge came to a disagreement on just how far the egalitarian principle could and should go. Southey believed they should take servants to carry out the hard work. Coleridge disagreed suggesting such a move was damaging to the ideology they were basing their community on.²³¹

²²⁹ Sister Eugenia, 'Coleridge's Scheme of Pantisocracy and American Travel Accounts', *PMLA*, 1930, 45, 1072

²³⁰ *Ibid*, 1069

²³¹ J. Edmund White, 'Pantisocracy and Pennsylvania: Plans of Coleridge and Southey and of Cooper and Priestley', *Bull. Hist. Chem.*, VOLUME 30, Number 2, 75

There is no evidence that Carey heard of this particular project in India although it is probable that he would have been aware of similar schemes. Regardless there is a similarity in the two models that suggests a common influence. Coleridge had strong connections to Joseph Priestley, a fellow Unitarian, and there is some suggestion that Priestley had agreed to become a part of the scheme and certainly the community carried Quaker principles. A particularly important element within the Pantisocracy scheme was the principle of having no president but sharing responsibility of leadership.²³²

The inspiration that Pantisocracy and similar schemes drew from the French revolution was, indirectly, the influence of Jean Jacques Rousseau. In Chapter Two we examined Rousseau's work on human rights, systems of government, and influences upon the Revolutionaries and republican ideology. However his writings had also focussed on inequality and its origins within society. Working around the example set by the Republic of Geneva, of which Rousseau was a citizen, he outlined the importance of equality and its role within society. As noted earlier S.P. Carey suggested that Carey's work was 'Rousseau made practical'.²³³ Within Carey's work he believed he could observe a practical framework similar to the one Rousseau endorsed in theory. Given our examination of his time in Debharta, and his journal entry and correspondence from Mudnabhati, it appears that his assessment and his linking Carey to Rousseau is credible. The utopian aspect provides a definite link to other such schemes, albeit in a different context, and these are overt in their use of Rousseau and his contemporaries. This fact should make us aware of this aspect of Carey's ideology in Carey's later community.

Another important influence on utopian schemes could be post-millennial theology, as outlined in Chapter 2. The importance that post-millennialism placed on the development of a kingdom on Earth before the return of Christ led to a picture of a world steadily improving, and doing so by the development of the Christian church. The Church would spread like the New Testament church had done and through its spreading lead humanity to growing peace and

²³² Sister Eugenia, 'Coleridge's Scheme of Pantisocracy and American Travel Accounts', *PMLA*, 1930, 45, 1079

²³³ S.P. Carey, *William Carey, Fellow of the Linnaean Society*, 77

prosperity. It is easy to see the step from this understanding to the idea of Utopia. Starting with a small group of people the utopia spreads, multiplying until it becomes a global event. The understanding of post-millennial theology made this a possibility not because of human achievement but because the plan was divine in its origins. Whilst Coleridge and Southey initially limited numbers in order to minimise discord, post-millennialism saw a worldwide Church made up of smaller communities that eventually covered the Earth.

Sister Eugenia suggests that Pantisocracy is generally relegated to a short reference in any study of Coleridge and is probably deserving of more attention.²³⁴ It is possible to argue that the same is true for Carey and his community in Debharta. Whilst it was not successful in terms of converts, the intent is important; and as Coleridge had sought a Republic of God's own making so too did Carey. Outside of the influence of the East India Company he was a pioneer building community amongst the natives he encountered. In this respect his time in Debharta was the very antithesis of imperial and followed closely to his original praxis.

Carey's opportunity for developing community at Mudnabhati was limited. He was essentially an employee of the government, or at least a semi autonomous Government body with close ties to imperial power structures. Although, in general, he had attempted to maintain some separation from the government, his position in Mudnabhati certainly made him a part of the resented colonial power. If he was the antithesis of an imperialist during his time at Debharta this was certainly not the case at Mudnabhati. His attempts to build church through street preaching met with limited response and as explanation of this a number of reasons can be offered. Although his method of street preaching will be dealt with in depth during subsequent chapters it is necessary, at this point, to recognise the important work of Lata Mani, whose observations centre on the fact that missionary preaching rarely progressed beyond highlighting negative aspects of indigenous religions in the hope that listeners would choose Christianity instead. This can be observed in his multiple journal references to preaching, of which the following is typical.

²³⁴ *Op Cit*, 1079

‘Our congregation consisted principally of Mohamedans, and has increased every Lords day. ... the Gospel and Koran insensibly became the subject of conversation. They alleged the divine authority of the Koran; we inquired “have you ever seen or read it?” The universal answer was no? ... The question now was “Then how can you obey it? and wherefore are you Mahomedans?”’²³⁵

As Mani outlines, this method was doomed to failure. The indigenous peoples understanding of religion as an all-encompassing way of life meant that an approach that referenced their religious texts and then highlighted inconsistencies between those texts and their religious practices (and then demanded change as a result), never challenged their religious perspectives. Their way of life was their way of life if for no better reason than an oral tradition past on from parents to their children.²³⁶ Carey’s post-reformation perspective taught him that his way of faith was more reasonable and that by demonstrating first, the unreasonable nature of their faith and, second, the reasonable nature of his faith, he could make converts.

Regardless of whether his participation in the colonial system or his misunderstanding of indigenous faith was the main cause, Carey was unable to convert a single Indian. His school failed, so did his Indigo plant, and Carey was once more left with no real employment opportunities. The arrival of reinforcements from England was timely. He had expected to provide a community for new missionaries whenever they should arrive but they, in fact, provided one for him. William Ward, Joshua Marshman *et al* had been denied entry into British India and had come under the protection of the Danish governor of Serampore, a town across the river from Calcutta. This situation provided new opportunity for Carey and he moved his family and his printing press to Serampore.²³⁷

Community living was an essential part of the missionaries’ way of life within Serampore. Although Carey had been unable to offer the new arrivals a stable

²³⁵ Eustace Carey, *Memoir of William Carey D.D.*, 95

²³⁶ Mani, 92f

²³⁷ BMS MSS, *Carey to Andrew Fuller* 3.2.1800, Box 13

missionary enterprise to engage in, his presence at Serampore did offer a sense of security. The absence of John Thomas from the mission ensured that the new missionaries looked to Carey for leadership. This ensured Carey influenced the direction of the mission and that his other values became central as praxis developed.

During the initial settlement at Serampore the missionaries, led by Carey, opted for the purchase of a large house allowing all the missionary families to live together. It provided farmland from which the whole community could live and room for growth. It allowed those converts who lost Caste and hence found themselves outside their native societal structure, to find refuge in community.²³⁸ In reality, this was most of them. Whilst rejection of Caste was a requirement that preceded baptism the Serampore missionaries' practice of communal eating made this formal rejection somewhat irrelevant. Any association with Europeans carried an automatic expulsion from Caste. This was especially true of eating with Europeans. As the missionaries made a practice of communal eating, often in view of the outside world, this happened on a regular basis.

Baptist missionaries were never particularly successful in making converts. Carey had made none during his first seven years. Of the natives converted the missionaries maintained serious doubts regarding the legitimacy of those conversions. Some of those who maintained a more serious commitment also maintained a close tie to the mission. Those that maintained the closest ties became missionaries themselves.²³⁹

The 'Forms of Agreement' were developed in 1805, formalising a system that had been fundamental to the mission since 1793. It had simply taken 12 years to get it on paper. The praxis demonstrates multiple aspects of Carey's approach to developing a missionary enterprise. Present within this approach is recognition of the central importance of community within the mission. From around the time Ward, Marshman *et al* arrived, the missionaries forms of agreement had

²³⁸ BMS MSS, Carey, Fountain, Marshman and Ward to the B.M.S. Committee 25.1.1800, Box 21

²³⁹ BMS MSS, Carey to J.W. Morris 7.2.1806, Box 13

demanded community based on a system of holding all things in common.²⁴⁰ This system included a practice of rotating leadership in which each male missionary temporarily held final authority within the mission station. William Ward describes the practical outworking of this in his journal entry dated 18.1.1800.

‘This week we have adopted a set of rules for the government of the family. All preach and pray in turn; one superintends the affairs of the family for a month, and then another; brother Carey is treasurer, and has the regulation of the medicine chest; brother Fountain is librarian. Saturday evening is devoted to adjusting differences, and pledging ourselves to love one another. One of our resolutions is, that no one of us do engage in private trade; but that all be done for the benefit of the mission.’²⁴¹

Observable in this system is a commitment not only to the principles of the New Testament church but also to a democratic system that did not acknowledge the authority of any one person over another. The Serampore Compact of 1805 encouraged this whilst endorsing native leadership of individual churches and limiting the role of missionaries within church government to one of supervision. This supervision was intended to protect infant churches from doctrinal error. It is here that we can observe the tension maintained between Carey’s principles of equality and his commitment to doctrine. The first, equality, holds a high view of talents and abilities of indigenous Christians. The second demands European authority primarily in the interests of orthodoxy.

It is unclear why the mission remained at Serampore. Perhaps having established a base there, no further movement of the central mission base was deemed necessary. A large number of missionary sub stations were created whilst the central mission remained at Serampore even when the 1813 Act of Parliament formally opened British India to missionary activity.²⁴² It does seem,

²⁴⁰ Eustace Carey, *Memoir of William Carey*, 306

²⁴¹ William Ward, *Journal* 18.1.1800 cited in George Smith, *Life of William Carey D.D. Shoemaker and Missionary*, 127

²⁴² Carey regularly included reports of the development of this network of stations. For example see BMS MSS, *Carey to Andrew Fuller* 27.2.1804, Box 13

however, that Carey discovered something at Serampore that was essential to the type of mission he wanted to encourage. I would suggest the focus on community, which carried all the background and influence of post millennial thought, republican ideology, and equality, seemed destined to flourish in Serampore with its moderate system of government.

In the same way that Coleridge and Southey recognised that they could not achieve their utopian goals in Britain, so it could be argued Carey recognised the pernicious effect of the East India Company. The constant attention of the Company was poison to the mission's community atmosphere. It is perhaps no coincidence that Carey always found himself in situations outside of the East India Company's direct control. We can observe of Debharta, Mudnabhati, and Serampore that each one had a distinct isolation whether it was the isolation of obscurity in Debharta, the isolation of distance in Mudnabhati, or the isolation of diplomacy in Serampore. In addition each location offered the potential for self-government that the missionaries attempted to pursue. Carey had early on demonstrated a commitment to church discipline of converts (His pundit Ram Basu was removed from the community for adultery) regardless of whether they were prosecuted by an external structure, native or colonial.²⁴³ The community sought legal channels at times, notably when an early convert's daughter was threatened with the potential for a forced marriage.²⁴⁴ However it appears for the most part that they were content to exist, independent of outside authority structures.

Jeffery Cox in *British Missionary Enterprise* dissects the difficult position British missionaries have found themselves in. Firstly he acknowledges the tension maintained between the Kingdom of Britain and the Kingdom of Christ. Recognition of this tension acknowledges the imperial question. Whilst some missionaries, including Carey, had no desire to spread the kingdom of Britain, they were inevitably drawn, in some respects at least, into the imperial identity. Cox builds around two strands of thought, one drawn from the work of Orientalist Edward Said and one from John and Jean Comaroff.

²⁴³ Geoffrey Oddie, *Imagined Hinduism; British Protestant Missionary Constructions of Hinduism*, 148

²⁴⁴ BMS MSS, *Letter to John Sutcliff* 8.4.1801, Box 13

The first strand is the 'Saidian' critique that 'power is the basis of cultural inequality'.²⁴⁵ There could be no real equality because the British person had power and the Indian person did not. In Said's analysis this created an inequality regardless of the individual's attitude to power. The second analysis, made by Jean and John Comaroff in *Of Revelation and Revolution*, identifies the 'multicultural Christian commonwealth of missionary fantasy'.²⁴⁶ In Cox's estimation, missionary hopes of creating this commonwealth demanded the development of ordained non-western leaders.²⁴⁷

Whilst building around these two strands of thought Cox recognises two distinctions within the British missionary narrative. The first is the distinction between the formal power structures of British rule, 'the law, the military, the police, ... slavery and indentured servitude' in comparison to 'the informal power of massive social, scholarly and religious inequality'.²⁴⁸ The second distinction is between two forms of Christianity, confessional and voluntarist. Cox makes his distinction here not just by denominational allegiance but also by recognising a differing praxis. The confessional stream focussed on building communities where natives could receive Christian institutions, whilst the second group, the voluntarist, within which Carey is included, primarily gathered churches of committed believers and delivered institutions for them afterwards.²⁴⁹ This analysis is given traction when examined alongside the Baptist (voluntarist) worldview examined in Chapter Three regarding building. The fact that the decision to dissent was essentially a move from inside the state church to outside, led missionaries to establish a church community first and proceed to institutions afterwards. In contrast the Church of England (confessional) was already tied to the power structures, and remained inside as part of a community that already existed. This may therefore have led them to focus on institution building, having never needed to develop new community.

Having developed this framework Cox suggests that the British missionaries' attempt at a Christian commonwealth was primarily a principle, and that in

²⁴⁵ Jeffery Cox, *The British Missionary Enterprise since 1700*, 18

²⁴⁶ cited in *Ibid*, 13

²⁴⁷ *Ibid*, 15

²⁴⁸ *Ibid*, 14

²⁴⁹ *Ibid*

practice it often turned into what may be termed a western domination of unordained workers. This appears in a section of Cox's work that demonstrates the unheralded contribution to the missionary enterprise made by unordained non-western participants and female missionaries. Particularly excluded from historical recognition are the non-western female participants. Whilst non-western ordained males, such as Philip Quaque, are acknowledged the above groups are not. He also observes mission records that make reference to a 'native teacher'²⁵⁰ and 'the bible woman',²⁵¹ which offer brief acknowledgment of involvement without giving the credit that is due.

Certainly there are cases within Serampore in which credit was not given where it was due. As regards female western missionaries, Hannah Marshman was instrumental in the creation of a school system for native girls and perhaps receives little credit amongst the much-heralded trio of Carey, Marshman and Ward. Cox critiques Carey for mentioning women only once in his *Enquiry* and then presses his point by drawing on evidence of the presence of women in spite of the *Enquiry's* relative silence.²⁵² He does not, however, provide any examination of historical B.M.S. documents in which Carey recognises the indispensable nature of the female missionaries in reaching the female population of India. The secluded nature of Indian women made their presence crucial to his mission structure. Carey comprehended this fact early in his enterprise, observing in correspondence that 'superstition secludes all the women of respectability from hearing the word of truth'.²⁵³

As regards the use of unordained non-western missionaries, Carey's missionary enterprise in India can be dated from 1793 – 1834, the year of his death. Whilst the first indigenous conversion took place in 1800, no mission training college appeared until 1818 and therefore no formal ordination took place. However, as observed above, Carey was decidedly forward-thinking in his recognition that Indian Christianity would only flourish when led by Indian Christians and makes

²⁵⁰ *Ibid*, 15

²⁵¹ *Ibid*, 16

²⁵² *Ibid*, 16f

²⁵³ B.M.S MSS, *Carey to B.M.S. Committee* 28.12.1796, Box 13

mention of Indian evangelists frequently in his correspondence.²⁵⁴ Whilst the tension between Indian Christianity and the extent to which inculturation could occur remained, the establishment of a native-led church was central, whether this was through formally un-ordained pastors to begin with, or ordained pastors after 1818. Carey certainly endorsed the continuance of European supervision but with prominent native leadership.²⁵⁵ Interestingly it is at times un-ordained workers that were named most prominently at Serampore. Ram Basu would be an example of this, an un-ordained pundit who was commended for his composition of the first Bengali hymn and his contribution to the Bengali New Testament.

Cox work is a thorough and insightful analysis of the British missionary enterprise at large. Given the nature of the work is missiography rather than biography it is not feasible to expect a minute examination of each individual missionary enterprise when his focus is broad in terms of time (1700 – present), denominational stream (confessional and voluntarist) and place (Asia, Africa and the West Indies). However it is the opinion of this author that his specific reference to Carey and the *Enquiry* make the above critique of his work important. The credibility of his theory, that the role of women and un-ordained natives went unrecognised, does not appear to stand close examination when using Serampore as a case study.

Jean and John Comaroff dismiss the multiracial Christian Commonwealth as a missionary fantasy. Cox is far less equivocal and suggests that it was not a miserable failure in all cases.²⁵⁶ As regards Carey and his enterprise, we are able to offer conclusions, based on the above, as to how successful or unsuccessful it was. Firstly we can speak of intentions. The values of equality and community observable in Carey pre-India are again present in his attempt to develop community. Cox's assessment that voluntarist mission initially focussed on church planting appears correct when observing Carey as a specific voluntarist example. His intention was that his community be based on equality and this

²⁵⁴ BMS MSS, *Carey to Sutcliff*, 29.7.1806 regarding native evangelists, BMS MSS, *Carey to Sutcliff*, 8.3.1809 regarding the superior ability of Indians to communicate

²⁵⁵ BMS MSS, *Carey to Fuller*, 12.5.1813

²⁵⁶ *Op Cit*, 14

equality was evidently notable to those around him judging by his wife's response to his community building efforts. It is more difficult to assess how it was received by the people he attempted to reach. Certainly at Mudnabhati he was more attached to the overt power structures Cox identifies. At Debharta and Serampore he was more able to avoid these overt structures. However if the Saidian critique that 'power is the basis of cultural inequality' is true, then Carey was always attached to this power base whether he thought he was or not. It is important however that Carey not only began the *Enquiry* with community but that community in the truest form available to him was his first real attempt at praxis.

Chapter Six

Carey and *Sati*

Returning to Mudnabhati following an itinerant missionary journey, William Carey came across a scene that brought about a rupture in his experience of India. In a letter to John Ryland Jr. he reports

‘We were near the village of Noya Serai; As it was evening, we got out of the boat to walk, when we saw a number of people assembled on the river side. I asked them, for what they were met? and they told me, to burn the body of a dead man. I enquired, whether his wife would die with him? they answered, yes; and pointed to the woman. She was standing by the pile, which was made of large billets of wood; about two and a-half feet high, four feet long, and two wide; on the top of which lay the dead body of her husband. Her nearest relation stood by her, and near her was a small basket of sweet-meats called kivy. I asked them, if this were the woman’s choice, or whether she were brought to it by any improper influence? They answered that it was perfectly voluntary. I talked till reasoning was of no use, and then began to exclaim with all my might against what they were doing, telling them that it was a shocking murder. They told me it was a great act of holiness, and added in a very surly manner, that if I did not like to see it, I might go further off, and desired me to go. I told them that I would not go; that I was determined to stay and see the murder, and that I should certainly bear witness of it at the tribunal of God. I exhorted the woman not to throw away her life, to fear nothing, for no evil would follow her refusal to burn. But she in the calmest manner mounted the pile, and danced on it, with her hands extended, as if in the utmost tranquility of spirit ... she then lay down by the corpse, and put one arm under its neck, and the other over it, Two bamboos were then put over them, and held fast down, and fire put to the pile, which immediately blazed very fiercely, owing to the dry and combustible materials of which it was composed. No sooner was the fire kindled, than all the people set up a great shout, “Hurree Bol, Hurree Bol!”

which is a common shout of joy, and an invocation of Hurree, the wife of Hur or Seeb. It was impossible to have heard the woman, had she groaned, or even cried aloud, on account of the mad noise of the people, and it was impossible for her to stir or struggle, on account of the bamboos which were held down on them like the levers of a press. We made much objection to their using these bamboos, and insisted that it was using force to prevent the woman getting up when the fire burnt her. But they declared that it was only done to keep the pile from falling down. We could not bear to see more, but left them, exclaiming loudly against the murder, and full of horror at what we had seen.'²⁵⁷

The practice of widow burning, known as *Sati*, goes back into antiquity. M.V.P. Kane offers endorsement of the practice through the earliest of Hindu scriptures, the *Rig Veda*.²⁵⁸ Kane suggests Rig Veda X.18.7, known as the *Sati hymn*, is the most likely reference to *Sati* within Hindu text. 'Let these women, whose husbands are worthy and are living, enter the house with ghee (applied) as corrylium (to their eyes). Let these wives first step into the pyre, tearless without any affliction and well adorned'. Although the connection to *Sati* is not explicit it has generally associated with the tradition and reportedly sung at modern day *Sati*. The actual meaning of the text is dependent on whether the correct verb is *agne* (go into the fire) or *agre* (to come forward).²⁵⁹ On point of grammar it appears that *Sati* is, in origin, the noun used as nomenclature for the woman involved, who **is** a *Sati*, rather than a verb describing the party involved as committing *Sati*. Regardless, both variations are now used and in the interests of clarity this thesis uses the term in line with the more common verb usage unless using a direct quote.

As a patriarchal society, 19th century India placed great emphasis on the possession of a wife by her husband. His death meant, in essence, that her life was over. Therefore the practice of voluntary death became popular. The initial impetus for Carey's examination for *Sati* was twofold. He encountered *Sati* first

²⁵⁷ Cited in George Smith, *Life of William Carey D.D., Shoemaker and Missionary*, 60

²⁵⁸ M.P.V. Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstra*, 199f

²⁵⁹ Francis Jarmen, *Sati: From Exotic Custom to Relativist Controversy*, 5

hand, as observed above, in 1799²⁶⁰ and was agitated enough attempt an intervention; however the apparent willingness of the widow made this impossible. The second motivating factor was a request from Governor Wellesley that Carey should carry out an investigation into child sacrifice.²⁶¹ Using this officially sanctioned opportunity, Carey investigated *Sati* independently alongside this governmental research and pushed the case for legislation against the practice. His report revealed that the practice had occurred 438 times that year in a 30 mile radius of Calcutta.²⁶²

The East India Company rejected Carey's report, which also contained an impassioned critique of *Sati*. This motivation behind this rejection appears clear. There was a general recognition that nothing should be done to upset the religious convictions of the natives.²⁶³ The East India Company was driven primarily by profits. In terms of untapped resources the Indian subcontinent was considerably wealthy and the British Empire, through the East India Company, held a stranglehold on these profits. The Governor-General's position was maintained through these profits and their continuation required a relatively peaceful co-existence between a ruling power and an oppressed indigenous people, many of whom were at least resentful. The successes of the East India Company did not just affect the position of the Governor-General but also the government in Britain. It was no longer possible for a country to survive on the strength of its monarch. The government of the late 18th century survived on its

²⁶⁰ Gupta, 23 (Gupta suggests this to be a BMS MSS but it does not appear to be present, however Carey's encounter with *Sati* is generally acknowledged)

²⁶¹ BMS MSS, *Carey to Rev J.W. Morris* 9.3.1802, Box 13

²⁶² Brian Stanley, *History of the Baptist Missionary Society*, 44, Ward in his journal estimated that between 25 000 and 30 000 such events took place each year across India as a whole.

²⁶³ The missionaries experienced Government opposition regularly between 1800 (time of moving to Serampore) and 1813 (Passing of commons bill allowing missionary activity) although Richard Wellesley developed a cordial relationship with Carey in his position of Governor between 1800-1805 other government figures were not so friendly. Carey records this opposition in a number of letters to the BMS Committee 17.3.1802 and Andrew Fuller 26.8.1806, 13.2.1807 BMS MSS. The letter to the BMS Committee records a tract that has been placed before a justice. This letter is dated the same month as Carey's letter to J.W. Morris referenced above. (ref. 5)

mercantile system and Britain's mercantile system was heavily reliant on the wealth of India.²⁶⁴

The British position in India was made easier by the co-operation of a large number of local rulers who were content to co-operate based on the benefit to their own financial welfare. This meant that the East India Company was intolerant of any practice or action that threatened to create a general uprising of indigenous people. This situation explains the reaction of Lord Minto's administration to the suspected involvement of Baptist Missionaries in the Vellore Mutiny in 1807.²⁶⁵ Whilst the protection of the Danish Governor of Serampore assured the missionaries' safety and residence in India, it would not have prevented the intended seizure of the mission press and a resulting cessation of the missionaries' major missional approach.²⁶⁶ The large military presence in India meant that any uprising was unlikely to be successful but it had the potential to weaken the British monopoly on India, especially given the regular French conflicts. These conflicts had a decided effect on British policy as can be seen in the temporary suspension of cordial relations with Danish Serampore.²⁶⁷ This was directly due to the declaration of war with Denmark, a development of the French-British conflict, and also in order to prevent any French attack, capture and subsequent holding of a critical Indian town with port access. In spite of the illegal presence of the missionaries in what was now British India the missionaries were allowed to stay. This was probably due to Carey's developing relationship with Richard Wellesley, then Governor General, and his increasing prominence at the new Fort William College. The college was a key project in Richard Wellesley's administration and Carey as tutor in Bengali and Sanskrit was probably too significant to be easily replaced.²⁶⁸

²⁶⁴ Mercantile is understood in the sense it is used in Adam Smith *Wealth of Nations*. The survival of the government in Britain was tied dramatically to the success of the colonies, especially, in the early 18th century, India. The monopoly of the Government run East India Company allowed Britain to profit greatly from Indian exports. Smith criticises this system strongly. (Smith, Chapter 4)

²⁶⁵ BMS MSS, *Carey to Sutcliff* 18.1.1808, Box 13

²⁶⁶ BMS MSS, *Carey to Fuller*, 18.6.1806, Box 13

²⁶⁷ George Smith, *Life of William Carey D.D., Shoemaker and Missionary*, 68

²⁶⁸ Eustace Carey, *Memoir of William Carey D.D.*, 304

The Governor Richard Wellesley expressed willingness to act against infanticide that involved the murder of unwilling, unprotected infants but refused to act against *Sati*, which consisted of responsible adults acting voluntarily. Further clarity is produced through the realisation that child infanticide was generally understood as a non-religious practice, and whilst there was some suggestion that it had its origins in a sacrifice to the river, as a way to ensure against the death of future children, this was not generally the case. As the practice had no support within Hindu scripture, Wellesley apparently felt comfortable legislating against it. Regardless of the religious background, child sacrifice most commonly stemmed from the inability of parents to support a female child who was considered an economic liability.²⁶⁹

The *Sati* campaign was bolstered by the parliamentary legislation of 1813, allowing missionaries to enter India. William Wilberforce was particularly involved within this process by speaking highly of Carey's knowledge and behavior.²⁷⁰ Given the missionaries increased security, they could now campaign more extensively against *Sati*. This campaign included extensive collaboration with Indian reformer Rammohun Roy. Roy and the missionaries had a similar goal in terms of *sati* and used similar language in expressing their emotive reaction to practice. Both Roy and Governor Bentwick used the language of abhorrent/revolting 'to all the feelings of nature'.^{271 272}

Roy's involvement is interesting particularly due to its motivations and influences. It would be impossible to assign Evangelical motives or influences to Roy's opposition to *Sati*. Roy's reform campaigns targeted what he understood to be an antiquated system, and at times he followed a similar praxis to that of the missionaries examined below. Some scholarship has suggested that his reform movement received its dominant influence from the French Revolution. Whilst Roy would have understood the parallels between slavery and *Sati*, that too was probably the result of revolutionary influences. When Roy visited Britain in 1830

²⁶⁹ P.N. Chopra, *A Comprehensive History of India Volume 3*, 105

²⁷⁰ Michael A. Rutz, *The Politicizing of Evangelical Dissent, 1811-1813*, 17f

²⁷¹ Rammohun Roy, *The life and letters of*, 149

²⁷² *Sati* – Regulation XVII A.D. 1829 of the Bengal Code 4.12.1889 in *The Days of John Company, Selections from the Calcutta Gazette*.

he insisted on traveling aboard a French ship to demonstrate his admiration for the revolutionaries and their impact on France.²⁷³

Sati was eventually banned in 1829, some 27 years after Carey's initial objection and report.²⁷⁴ Governor Bentinck, an Evangelical Anglican, signed the order making the process of widow burning officially illegal. The governor's decree was translated by Carey, neatly tying together the involvement of three prominent figures in bringing about the eventual ban. Roy was brought into the debate through an intense personal encounter with *Sati* in 1812. His Sister in law was burned along with her husband with Roy unable to find effective means of diffusing the situation.²⁷⁵ His involvement was indispensable as it provided the East India Company with indigenous support when an appeal against the Sati prohibition was made to the British Government. This appeal took place in 1830 in the form of a petition signed by orthodox Hindus. Although there had been greater support for, and tolerance of, missionaries following the 1813 legalisation of missionary endeavor, the potential for uprising was still a concern. If a decision was upsetting to the native population **and** had no potential to increase East India Company profits it was unlikely to be legislated. Roy personally carried a counter petition signed by native reformers demonstrating to the British Government that public opinion was at the very least divided.²⁷⁶

Carey's was highly involved until the end as he was given responsibility for translating the governmental order.²⁷⁷ His personal translation of the governmental order reportedly involved his surrendering a preaching engagement in order to do so for fear that one more person may die before the order was spread. This action is illustrative of his understanding of the importance of social justice in mission. He apparently valued this process as highly as he did the opportunity for evangelistic address and in so doing demonstrated the importance that social reform held within his praxis. I would

²⁷³ E.Hosbawn, *The Age of Revolution 1789-1848*, 55

²⁷⁴ Lata Mani, *Contentious Traditions*, 85

²⁷⁵ Clare Midgley, 'Female Emancipation in an Imperial Frame: English Women and the Campaign Against Sati (widow-burning) in India, 1813-30', *Women's History Review*, 9:1,2000, 109

²⁷⁶ *Ibid*, 109

²⁷⁷ V.N. Datta, *Sati: A Historical, Social and Philosophical Enquiry Into the Hindu Rite of Widow Burning*, 106

suggest however that it would be an anachronistic oversimplification to suggest that deciding to translate the order rather than preach demonstrated an argument for a commitment to reform over and above evangelism. It would assume that Carey's theory allowed a differentiation between mission and social justice and that from that theory he could differentiate in praxis. I would suggest that it would be more correct to say that he did not distinguish the difference between the two. Even accepting that perceptions of Carey as the father of modern mission are somewhat illusory, it is important to acknowledge the relative dearth of modern missionary enterprises from which he could draw precedent. His way of intentionally achieving his aim of Christianisation and Civilisation was developed both before, and as he encountered India. In Britain he had preached evangelistically because he believed Christianity was a response to a message, and in Britain he had opposed slavery, not because it promoted Christianity, at least in reference to conversions, but because slavery was intrinsically opposed to the ideals of equality and justice which he, and other Particular Baptists, saw within Christianity.

Scholarship on *Sati* covers a wide range in terms of perspectives and background. It has been approached by both Western and Indian scholars, from a feminist and colonialist perspective. The most complete study is Catherine Weinberger-Thomas' *Ashes of Immortality*. Weinberger-Thomas covers a detailed history of *Sati* but perhaps due to a secular embarrassment over Christian-based missiography, does not mention Carey or Serampore even in passing.²⁷⁸ Given the earliest involvement in the eventual prohibition against *Sati* (there was earlier interest but none that so clearly influenced the eventual governmental order of 1829) this decision is extraordinary. Ramohan Roy's appearance as the earliest native involvement in 1812 receives considerable attention by Weinberger-Thomas and Carey's involvement predates it by 10 years.²⁷⁹ He was also acknowledged both in Britain (in parliamentary address) and in India (by Roy himself) as being an important part of the campaign. Weinberger-Thomas' study has also been criticised by Pinney (2001) and Jarman

²⁷⁸ Catherine Weinberger-Thomas, *Ashes of Immortality*

²⁷⁹ Carey's involvement is recognised by Lata Mani in spite of her criticisms. *Contentious Traditions*, 85

(2002) for failing to recognise the ‘for and against’ question.²⁸⁰ The study attempts to ignore the positions and supporting arguments that the debate was based upon in favour of a historical narrative of *Sati*. This may further account for her decision to omit references to Carey and Serampore. The missionaries were overt in their representation of the ‘against’ campaign.

More relevant for this thesis is Lata Mani’s *Contentious Traditions*, which approaches the campaign and prohibition on sati as a discursive British construct.²⁸¹ Mani suggests that British rulers, in which number Carey is included, formalised *Sati* taking what was a regional caste-based phenomenon and giving it structure and recognition. Mani suggests that the British had little interest in the fate of the women evidenced by the fact that they were able to identify a good *Sati* and a bad *Sati*. As observed in the previous chapter, Mani is particularly critical of Carey’s approach to Indian religion, finding it to be ignorant of the manner in which Hinduism worked. This, Mani, claims demonstrates a fundamental misunderstanding of a culture where an appeal to the Shasta’s was not an appeal to a text but a to a way of life.²⁸² She notes their assumption that ‘the rhythm of life was determined by the precepts of an all legislating scripture’.²⁸³ Carey, we can observe, treated the matter somewhat like a reformer. Luther had challenged the Catholic Church on unscriptural practices knowing that they had a commitment to a biblical text, at least in theory, and by demonstrating that their practices were unscriptural weakened their position. This was only possible because of their theoretical commitment to scripture. It did not work in India where no such commitment existed. In this view she is supported by Kenneth Cracknell who observes, of protestant missionaries, that their central question was always ‘is this practice reasonable?’ He suggests that this question could actually be phrased ‘is it rational to practice this based on evidence found within the text?’²⁸⁴

²⁸⁰ Frances Jarman, 1f

²⁸¹ Jarman, 8

²⁸² *Ibid*, 108

²⁸³ *Ibid*, 105

²⁸⁴ Kenneth Cracknell, *Justice Courtesy and Love: Theologians and Missionaries Encountering World Religions 1846-1914*, 14

Mani finds this practice, followed by Carey and his fellow missionaries, to be a curious one as it condemns natives for not following their scriptural texts rather than arguing that the practices were ‘degraded in and of themselves’.²⁸⁵ Here Mani appears to fall into the error that she attempts to highlight in missionary praxis. The missionaries certainly attempted to demonstrate the unscriptural nature of the practice in order to condemn it, but this did not preclude their initial revulsion at the practice **before** they knew anything about its ‘scriptural’ nature. This can be seen in Carey’s above journal entry, recounting his first encounter with *sati*.

Mani assigns to both the missionaries and East India Company officials the same understanding of India. They based everything on three interrelated assumptions, firstly the hegemony of Brahmin scriptures, secondly the unreflective indigenous obedience to these texts and thirdly the religious nature of *Sati*.²⁸⁶ Working out of the writings of Carey’s missionary colleague, William Ward, Mani begins a trend amongst secular mission historians in observing the difference between the writings of missionaries for private usage and their public writings. She suggests a sensationalizing of indigenous religious practices for home consumption. Of *Sati*, specifically, she observes Ward’s detailed, emotional portrayal in his book, *A View of the History, Literature and Mythology of the Hindoos* and contrasts it with his matter of fact recording of a *Sati* in his personal journals.²⁸⁷

Mani’s work contains strong parallels with the later works of Anna Johnson’s *Missionary Writing and Empire*, and Jeffery Cox’s *The British Missionary Enterprise since 1700*. Johnson provides a study of Evangelical literature as a genre and examines how the developing figure of the noble savage established a need in missionary ethnography to demonstrate various evils about native society. This demonstrated their need of salvation. Unfortunately they also had to demonstrate that they were able to attain to the gospel and this required a

²⁸⁵ Mani, 95

²⁸⁶ *Ibid*, 29

²⁸⁷ *Ibid*

balance be maintained.²⁸⁸ If the presentation of native society was too bad then they became unreachable.

Cox develops this theme by comparing missionary literature for home consumption with literature for native consumption. In his assessment missionaries followed a practice that he terms 'defamatory synecdoche' or 'defamation of the other'.²⁸⁹ Missionary funding requirements made it necessary for them to over emphasise aspects of local culture that would most grip the attention of potential donors. In demonstrating this defamation of the other Cox references Carey's letter to his father prior to leaving England in which he references Hindus as 'the most mild inoffensive people in the world'.²⁹⁰ He contrasts this with the significant body of missionary literature (including but not limited to Carey and Serampore) that generally contains a more negative portrayal than the above.

Cox's analysis of this defamation of the other appears to assign to Carey, and his fellow missionaries, a low view of humanity.²⁹¹ In contrast, I would suggest a low view of humanity is something that they were originally reacting against. Whilst they did have a fully formed Calvinistic theology that emphasised the depravity of the individual human, whether western or non-western, they maintained a high view of the abilities of non-western people that was relatively progressive in Carey's day. The comparison between Captain James Cook's diary and Carey's *Enquiry* demonstrates this point aptly. Cook believed that the people he encountered could not attain to the gospel. Rather than the figure of the noble savage, which later missionaries would react against, Carey was reacting against a view of native peoples as depraved, lacking in western knowledge and remaining a step below western human beings. It was this view of humanity that had allowed the abuses of slavery to become prominent. This belief suggested that societies were classified as either the fully developed human of western

²⁸⁸ Anna Johnson, *Missionary Writing and Empire*, 199

²⁸⁹ Jeffery Cox, *The British Missionary Enterprise Since 1700*, 118

²⁹⁰ *Ibid*, 125

²⁹¹ Johnson does not use this term but there is significant overlap in their presentation of missionary correspondence, whilst there is some difference in the motive they assign.

culture or the sub human of Cook's diaries.²⁹² Whilst the noble savage did not need salvation the sub human could not attain to it.

The defamation of the other, that Cox observes, offers an attempt to understand the difference evident between missionary fundraising literature and their personal writings.²⁹³ I would suggest that these contrasts could be more satisfactorily understood through examining the speeches and diaries of William Wilberforce. Brycchan Carey has written extensively on Wilberforce's use of sentimental rhetoric throughout his parliamentary addresses on the subject of abolition. He also makes the observation that the use of this rhetorical style has only been recognised by scholars in the last few years.²⁹⁴

Brycchan Carey analyses Wilberforce's use of emotive language in his original parliamentary address regarding slavery. This included narrative accounts of journey's on slave ships in order to connect on an emotional level with his listeners.²⁹⁵ He further suggests that this style of rhetoric was prominent within the language of other significant speakers in favour of abolition.²⁹⁶ In this we observe a similar approach to the one followed by Carey *et al* in both their missionary correspondence and their homiletic addresses. Although Wilberforce was primarily engaged in gaining parliamentary support whilst missionaries were engaged in raising financial support the use of sentimental rhetoric is present and perhaps necessary in both. It allows the listener/reader to connect emotionally with the subject in discussion and make a response.

An examination of Wilberforce's personal diaries reveals a similar trend to that observed within the diaries of the Serampore missionaries. There are references to the slave trade and abolition, just as references to *Sati* (and other aspects of Indian culture the missionaries perceived as negative) are present within missionary journals and diaries. However these extracts contain the matter of fact presentation of data critiqued by Mani in Ward's Journal's. Wilberforce

²⁹² Nicholas Hudson, 'From "Nation to "Race": The Origin of Racial Classification in Eighteenth-Century Thought', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, Vol. 29, No. 3 (Spring, 1996), 249f

²⁹³ Cox, *British Missionary Enterprise*, 124f

²⁹⁴ Brycann Carey, 281

²⁹⁵ Sir Reginald Coupland, *Wilberforce: A Narrative*, 101

²⁹⁶ *Ibid*, of Charles Fox, 102. Coupland also makes reference to Pitt and Burke.

records that he has given up Sunday to 'the slave trade'.²⁹⁷ He calmly weighs his friendship with Pitt over pursuing Abolition²⁹⁸ and following a defeated bill records 'I am permanently hurt about the slave trade'.²⁹⁹ This is an important development as the conclusions drawn regarding missionary writings cannot be made regarding Wilberforce.

Both Mani's suggestion that missionaries did not oppose the practices for their own sake and Cox's analysis of the defamation of the other are shown to be lacking on this basis. There is no reason to suggest Wilberforce is not opposing slavery for its own sake (as Mani suggests of the Serampore missionaries and *Sati*) and no reason to suggest he is defaming 'the other' in order to elicit support (as Cox suggests of missionary literature). The practice of using sentimental rhetoric provides a far more natural reading in both cases without concluding that they didn't passionately oppose the respective issue for its own sake or that they embellished it for financial reasons.

Wilberforce was himself involved in fighting *Sati* in Britain, making speeches about the practice in parliament. Prior to this he had demonstrated considerable support to the missionary enterprise. He spoke extensively on the benefits that missionaries brought to the country and was joined by both Charles Grant and Richard Wellesley (two prominent East India Company officials) in commending the contributions Carey had made.³⁰⁰ In further use of sentimental rhetoric, Wilberforce recounted what he called 'fireside evils' decrying the state of India when compared to Christian countries where women enjoyed equality.³⁰¹ In truth Britain remained a largely patriarchal society and the Baptist missionaries in India did not deviate from this order. However women's rights were an important part of the *Sati* campaign. It is at this point that the figure of the noble savage becomes important, although it relates to India in a slightly different way to the southern hemisphere. Whilst Wilberforce decried the 'evils of Hindustan', this response was necessary in a time when the English in India had spoken of

²⁹⁷ *Ibid*, 97

²⁹⁸ *Ibid*, 108

²⁹⁹ *Ibid*, 141

³⁰⁰ George Smith, *Life of William Carey D.D., Shoemaker and Missionary*, 343

³⁰¹ Midgley, 71

the greatness of Hinduism.³⁰² This reveals an interesting shift between the missionary attitude of the late 18th century, in which they had responded to the pre-enlightenment view of Cook, and the early 19th century, where they began to react to the enlightenment view of English orientalists. In this respect missionaries became both proponents and critics of enlightenment.

Further parallels are observable in comparing reaction to the *Sati* campaign and the reaction in Britain to Wilberforce's anti-slavery campaign. Wilberforce's campaign was well underway by the time Carey left for India and its initial presentation, which took place in 1789 and demanded the immediate cessation of the trade and the freeing of all slaves within the British Empire, was defeated by a large majority. Carey and Wilberforce shared a common conviction that slavery/*Sati* were larger issues than the maintenance of an empire. Both appeared unconcerned regarding the potential diminishment of British global preeminence. The slavery issue was an issue of the value of a human being. Just as the anti-slavery campaign was politically dangerous in Britain, so the anti-*Sati* campaign was potentially detrimental to the missionary cause. As the anti-slavery campaigns popularity waxed and waned with the French situation, so too did the missionaries campaign against *Sati*. The cessation of cordial relations with Danish Serampore was based around the renewal of the French/British conflict. India, as the crown jewel in the Empire, was carefully guarded, and anything that potentially damaged the British position was opposed.

The Minto administration's strong response to reports that the Serampore missionaries had distributed contentious material, leading to an uprising in the Vellore region amongst Sepang soldiers in 1807, is demonstrative of the severity with which such a threat was perceived.³⁰³ Lord Minto had reportedly threatened to confiscate the mission's press as a result of this. The Vellore Mutiny had threatened stability in British India and had led to a restriction of missionary activity in spite of their location in Serampore. The fact that a significant part of the missionary activity took place in Calcutta, alongside Carey's involvement in Fort William College, which brought an important income

³⁰² Midgley, 97

³⁰³ BMS MSS, *Carey to John Sutcliff*, 18.1.1808 Box 13

into the mission, enabled the East India Company to maintain significant control over the Serampore mission.

The suggestion that missionaries had something to gain by manufacturing a negative portrayal of *Sati* holds some merit, but it is equally true that they risked their own position to campaign against *Sati*. In this respect missionaries placed themselves in a precarious position in the 'contact zone' analysed by Cox.³⁰⁴ Not only did their position on *Sati* place them in a vulnerable position in their relationship to natives (who could be inclined to see the campaign as both imperial and anti-cultural, two of the general criticisms historiographers have made regarding missionaries), but it also placed them in an equally difficult position in a second contact zone, that being between missionaries (especially semi-legal voluntarist ones) and government.

The campaign against *Sati* had implications for the missionaries' relationship with the East India Company at a time when any activity that escalated East/West tensions could be represented as treasonous. Whilst this was probably not the case post-1813, when missionaries received greater freedom, it was certainly the case before this date. Missionaries often risked their own position in India through engaging with an inflammatory subject, and their actions, especially in light of Minto's response to events in 1807, were open to an anti-Imperial interpretation. I would suggest that we should acknowledge a dual contact zone that reflects the difficult balance missionaries had to maintain.

If the anti-*Sati* campaign was detrimental to the missionaries' relationship with the East India Company then it was as arguably just as detrimental to the missionaries' evangelistic endeavors. Whilst Wilberforce's campaign to abolish slavery had opposition, it was certain to carry good will from the people he was attempting to help. The same could not be said of Carey's anti-*Sati* campaign. The perception that *Sati* was a religious duty made it possible that even those he viewed himself as attempting to help could respond negatively. There was a distinct possibility that opposition to *Sati* made evangelism more difficult because it potentially contributed to the perception that missionaries were anti-

³⁰⁴ Cox, *British Missionary Enterprise*, 17

Hindu. In principle, missionaries had more to gain by tolerating negative aspects of the Hindu system.

Chapter Seven

Carey and the Caste System

(An examination of Carey's attitude toward the Caste system, Caste being the Hindu system of *Jati*, which encompassed every aspect of 18th/19th Century India. Carey's combative stance is examined in the light of the Republican tendencies demonstrated in Britain prior to his journey to India. The works of Thomas Paine are considered.)

Street Preaching

Upon arrival in India John Thomas and William Carey proceeded to the nearest market place and began, over the next three hours, to instruct the local population on Christian faith and the necessity of salvation.³⁰⁵ At this stage Thomas did the significant preaching as his previous years in the country had given him a fluency in spoken Bengali that Carey could not yet hope to have achieved. It is interesting to contemplate the reasoning behind their praxis, as it appears to be a different praxis to the one Carey had outlined in the closing section of the *Enquiry*.³⁰⁶ Carey had outlined a plan that involved living amongst the natives and building community. He had not suggested a praxis that essentially involved wandering into the nearest market place and delivering a 3-hour sermon on Christian doctrine. Perhaps Thomas was grandstanding for his less experienced companion or perhaps he wanted to demonstrate his value and commitment to the mission. Regardless of the reason, street preaching would become a staple part of Carey's Indian praxis in spite of little evidence that this effort, or the many others over the next 40 years were particularly successful.

Carey and Thomas had grown up in the Britain of John Wesley. Wesley had died one year previous to the founding of the society and only two years before Carey's voyage. He had stood over religious life in Britain like a colossus and, even after his death, indelible marks of his ministry remained. Carey's developing mind had, whilst in Britain, embraced the need for home mission and had made the logical connection that the same should be done abroad. Given this

³⁰⁵ BMS MSS, *Carey Journal*, Box 13 Section 1

³⁰⁶ William Carey, *Enquiry*, 75

understanding it is easy to see why he would quickly warm to the same techniques preferred by both Wesley and Whitfield.

References to street preaching appear early and often in both Carey's journal and in his correspondence, demonstrating that it quickly became his significant focus alongside his translation work.³⁰⁷ Translation, however, was a relatively slow process and early on there were significant challenges to printing his manuscript. Preaching gave him a missionary focus outside of translation. In January 1795 he wrote to both the committee and Fuller informing them of his advancement in preaching.³⁰⁸ His linguistic developments had reached a point where he could make himself understood in Bengali and Hindustani. The letter also detailed a preaching meeting in a Muslim village.

In the seven-year period covering his arrival in India until his move to Serampore, Carey's correspondence reports no Indian converts. As distressing as it was to him, he appears aware that it was at least as distressing to his colleagues back home. They had struggled through his decision to obtain work as an indigo manufacturer and had consistently thrown their financial support behind the mission.³⁰⁹ It is not clear from any of the society's meetings that this scenario, i.e. a failure to convert Indians, had ever been discussed. They had debated back and forth the theological support for mission but nobody seemed to doubt that **if** somebody undertook a missionary enterprise then people would respond. Nobody had asked what happened if people just smiled politely. Carey's early letters attempt to retain an optimistic tone. His message to the society was that success had not occurred yet but that he remained convinced it would occur soon.³¹⁰ Here we observe the outworking of the worldview change anticipated in Chapter Four. The society experienced a change in worldview, from 'faithful waiting' to 'expectant going', and this caused a tension when no converts were made. Interestingly, this tension was more difficult for those in Britain than for Carey.

³⁰⁷ BMS MSS, *Carey to BMS Committee* 6.1.1795, 18.3.1795, 13.8.1795, These constitute 3 of Carey's first mission reports and each mentions his street preaching as a prominent aspect of the work.

³⁰⁸ BMS MSS, *Carey to BMS Committee* 6.1.1795, Box 13. *Carey to Fuller*, 30.1.1795, Box 13

³⁰⁹ BMS MSS, *Carey to BMS Committee*, 1.1796, Box 13

³¹⁰ BMS MSS, *Carey to Andrew Fuller*, 17.1.1796, Box 13

In India Carey was something of a novelty and was rarely without some audience. His street preaching often ended as dialogue between Carey and Brahmin scholars. The opposition of Brahmin scholars meant that increasingly street preaching became used as a way to attack certain Indian practices that the missionaries considered disagreeable.³¹¹ This is not necessarily a criticism of the missionaries as they often had reasons for their beliefs such as with *Sati*, which as discussed in the last chapter held strong parallels with Baptist understanding of slavery in Britain. As a general principle they believed that aspects of the culture were wrong and therefore required opposition. As shown earlier, by examination of the Northamptonshire Baptist Association, their worldview contained a particularly high view of Scripture. This view allowed them to make judgment on which aspects of culture should be opposed. The previously noted Andrew Fuller reference to the 'oracles of God', which was revealing of the Baptist denomination in Northamptonshire in general, is also relevant here and Carey demonstrated no deviation from this principle. However an understanding of the hermeneutical effect appears lacking and there appears to be a certain lack of awareness, early on, that their new context might affect the message they delivered.

When responding to objections to mission Carey's *Enquiry* had suggested that a second Pentecost was not needed as any language could be learned within a couple of years. In this assessment he appears to have underestimated the difference between learning to communicate a complex ideas rather than a simple one. As the missionary enterprise grew Carey demonstrated a growing awareness of problems within his street preaching praxis. The first of these, revealed to John Sutcliff in a journal letter dated Dec 1800, just after the move to Serampore, is a growing awareness that he is not making himself understood to the degree he had first assumed.³¹² This is demonstrated through a misunderstanding one of his earliest converts had gained regarding Christianity. Carey reports that Gohul, a native convert, had understood Christians would never die. Although Carey suspects it may be explained by the fact that he is 'naturally susceptible of an enthusiastic turn' nevertheless the doctrinal error at

³¹¹ BMS MSS, *Carey, Marshman and Ward to BMS Committee*, 8.1803, Box 21

³¹² BMS MSS, *Carey to John Sutcliff* 29.12.1800, Box 13

this stage was concerning to a denomination built on strong biblical foundations.³¹³

This experience, and others like it, produced a shift in praxis and the printing of translations became the dominant aspect of the missionaries work.³¹⁴ Initially this printing took the form of Scripture and tracts, but the printing of tracts ceased in 1809 after an incident in which a tract caused negative responses from both Indians and the British Government.³¹⁵ As a result of this paradigm shift Indians increasingly carried out the significant proportion of preaching work whilst Europeans held directing roles.³¹⁶ During the time in which street preaching was a dominant praxis a significant proportion of it was spent in attacking Caste. Even when praxis changed and street preaching became the focus of 'native evangelists', the missionaries developed ways to undermine the system whether through literature or in more covert ways. In understanding this process it is important that we gain a deeper understanding of Caste.

The Caste System

(An examination of the history of the Caste system including its place in Hindu writings and its practical outworking in the period 1793-1832)

The Caste system is unique to the Indian sub-continent; interestingly, however, this does not make it unique to a particular faith although its origins are distinctly Hindu. The nature of the Caste system is one of exclusivity; it defines whom one may socialise with.³¹⁷ The result of this is that those of non-Caste religion form their own Caste if not in name, at least in principle.³¹⁸ Therefore those of the Islamic faith in 18th and 19th century India formed Islamic Castes with their own distinctions as to which Hindu Castes were acceptable and which were not.

³¹³ *Ibid*

³¹⁴ BMS MSS, *Carey to J.W. Morris* 9.3.1802, Box 13

³¹⁵ BMS MSS, *Carey to Andrew Fuller* 27.3.1809

³¹⁶ BMS MSS, *Carey to J.W. Morris*, 7.2.1806

³¹⁷ Louis Dumont, *Homo Hierarchicus*, 21

³¹⁸ Carey experienced this very principle in Mudnabhati, he records it in his journal (Carey Journal, October 13th 1794 in E. Carey, *Memoir*)

Caste has a mysterious history, one that is almost impossible for a western mind to analyse being both rigid and restricting yet, paradoxically, fluid and changing. In attempting to understand Caste two things are important: first, we must remember that the term Caste is a European designation used to describe the social structures, observed in their exploration of the Indian sub-continent indeed, the explorer Vasco de Gama was the first to use this term upon his arrival in India;³¹⁹ second, we must clearly define terms and distinguish the difference between the myth tradition of Caste, or *Varna*, and the structure present in the India Carey experienced, *Jati*. Caste, on one level, is simply the group one enters at the beginning of life, as defined by who your parents are. However, on another level it defines every area of life. It determines with whom you can marry, eat, and converse, and also where you can live and what employment you can take.³²⁰ Although the origins of this system are not immediately clear, scholars have suggested two distinct theories.

Jati has its origin in the Hindu concept of *Varna*. The religious theory of this evolution is found in the Hindu text known as the *Rig Veda*. Here we are told of the origins of the first man, *Parusa*, and how, after his creation, there sprang from his body the four-fold society.³²¹ In this event 'the Brahman was his mouth, the arms were made the Prince (Ksatriyas) his thighs the common people (Vaisyas) and from his feet the serf (Sudras) was born'.³²² Dumont suggests that this concept may have its actual origin in politics and sociology rather than religion. He notes that India was invaded around 1500bc by Aryan peoples and suggests that *Varna* may have been an invention to prevent interbreeding with the indigenous peoples.³²³ It prevented their intermarriage through a concept of purity. Hutton suggests that *Varna* and *Jati* are very different but post-Vedic scholars used the concept of *Varna* to endorse a now rigid and inflexible Caste system.³²⁴ Interestingly, Max Muller provides the same analysis of *Sati* suggesting the reading of the *Sati Hymn* was an invention of the dominant

³¹⁹ J. Jones, *India, its Life and Thought*, 91

³²⁰ *Ibid*, 113

³²¹ J. Hutton, *Caste in India*, 149

³²² R.R. Zaehner., *The Rig Veda, an English Translation of the Hindu Scriptures*, 10

³²³ Louis Dumont, *Homo Hierarchicus*, 28

³²⁴ Hutton, 66

Brahmin Caste in order to continue their dominance of the lower Castes.³²⁵ There is therefore a precedent in orientalist scholarship of understanding Brahmin domination of lower Castes in and through Indian cultural traditions. Dirks' suggests that *Varna* was probably not dissimilar to western concepts of upper, middle and lower class peoples.³²⁶ It was *Jati* as defined in the '*Laws of Manu*' that became the inflexible phenomenon Carey experienced as the Caste system.

In addition to the examination of the origins of Caste above we must note some important points. Whilst all Castes observed during Carey's missionary enterprise, in theory, fitted into the original *Varna* framework there had been a great deal of division and sub-division. This had happened to such an extent that Dumont declared it to be impossible to estimate the number of Castes.³²⁷ This is made even more difficult by the vast differences found across India geographically. Finally, we must note the connection of Caste to *Karma*. The Hindu belief in reincarnation meant that the life led affected your position in the next life. It could be claimed therefore that Caste did not deny the opportunity of social improvement as some have claimed but they simply held it to be impossible in this life.

The Hindu religion that Carey experienced, then, includes a system in which each member was ranked in terms of their relationship to people around them. They could instantly recognise a person as being of equal, lesser or greater purity than they themselves were and so recognise both those with whom they could eat and drink as well as those with whom they could not. It is easy to see how important the missionaries' understanding and response to the Caste system would be. Should they condemn the system as being in opposition to the values of Christianity, and if so, on what scriptural basis? Or should they regard it as a social class system, more extreme, but similar in principle, to that found in Britain? This question led to the additional question of how wide spread their

³²⁵ Paul Thomas, *Indian Women Through the Ages*, 234

³²⁶ N. Dirks, *Castes of Mind*, 39

³²⁷ Dumont, 33f

response should be. Should it be a response to the Caste system as it concerned India or the Caste system as it concerned converts to Christianity?

As observed of Carey's praxis in Chapter Six the limited nature of missionary activity in India meant that relatively little precedent existed for Carey to take guidance from. His response, based on previous values, would determine how the Baptist Missionary Society would respond to Caste. Whilst Carey was unable to make any native converts during his first seven years he was able to build up an impression and a homiletic response to Hinduism, included in this was a response to Caste. He was also able to inform the society members back home of this process in action.

A letter to Andrew Fuller dated 23.3.1797 appears to demonstrate the above process in development. Carey's correspondence begins by expressing his dissatisfaction at his failure to convert indigenous people to Christianity. He assures Fuller of his conviction that conversions will follow in spite of the fact that 'Caste, and a great number of superstitions, are great obstacles'.³²⁸ He then recognises the 'real problems' he faces, which are the lack of native scriptures and the depravity of humanity, and asserts his belief that the printing of scripture and coming of the Spirit will lead to a quick and lasting spread of Christianity, his pen then turns immediately back to the problem of Caste.

I would suggest that this framing of the Evangelical ideas of Scripture and Human Depravity with the sociological problem of Caste is potentially informative of Carey's mission praxis. Carey begins by outlining the Caste problem and then asserts the 'real' problem and its solution along with an allusion to 1 John 2:8.³²⁹ He then immediately reverts back to the Caste problem and suggests that it may be that 'general knowledge may first prevail and pave the way for the losing of Caste and joining to the Lord'.³³⁰ Following a dismissal of Fuller's suggestion that he allow Caste to continue unchecked he moves on to a

³²⁸ BMS MSS, *Carey to Andrew Fuller*, 23.3.1797, Box 13

³²⁹ Yet I am writing you a new command; its truth is seen in him and you, because the darkness is passing and the true light is already shining.

³³⁰ BMS MSS, *Carey to Andrew Fuller*, 23.3.1797, Box 13

discussion of politics and how it has affected the African mission and a reassurance for Fuller that they 'are all cold in a political sense'.³³¹

Given the connections evident between Carey and radical republicanism established in Chapter Four, this is a particularly interesting way of framing his thought. Carey begins by examining a social order, albeit one that had a distinct religious context and history, and suggests it is a significant blockage to conversion. The Fuller-Carey-Fountain triangle referenced in Chapter Four and outlined in detail by E. Daniel Potts³³² is demonstrative of Fuller's concern and response to any expressed radical political sympathies amongst Baptist Missionary Society agents.

John Fountain had reportedly written several letters referencing the French Revolution in a positive manner and Fuller, having already faced similar problems in Africa, warned him to be more circumspect.³³³ Carey reassures Fuller that Fountain hears 'perpetual lectures' on this subject. Fuller's opposition to any republican tendencies is further demonstrated through his decision to change the name of BMS sister societies from corresponding societies to assistant societies in 1793.³³⁴ Carey was obviously absent by this point and the change does not reflect upon his political views but rather echoes the sentiments displayed by Fuller in his reaction to John Fountain. Possibly fearing the conservative Fuller's response to involvement in socio-political order, Carey carefully restates the traditional Evangelical narrative, reaffirming his belief that scripture and Spirit is all that is required.

Having affirmed this central Baptist doctrine, Carey returns to his original issue, Caste, and how to remove it. In this he unites himself with J.C. Ryland's position, (that Caste may be removed through general knowledge), and refutes Fuller's suggestion that social orders may stand in the face of the spread of Christianity and that natives could be brought into the church with this order intact. Ryland's suggestion appears to recognise the importance of developing new civil order as well as making conversions whilst Fuller appears focused on conversions

³³¹ *Ibid*

³³² E. Daniel Potts, *British Baptist Missionaries in India 1793-1837*, 171f

³³³ S.P. Carey, *William Carey, Fellow of the Linnaean Society*, 77

³³⁴ B Stanley, *History of the Baptist Missionary Society*, 16, 23f

regardless of the development of the larger society. The importance Carey placed on community made it impossible for him to affirm Fuller's suggestion. He observes that if the natives do not break Caste voluntarily they will lose it by association with the missionaries. In order to survive, the converts must form a community as supportive as Caste whilst maintaining an entirely different structure. It must be open where Caste was closed, and it must be egalitarian where Caste was based on hereditary privilege.

Carey closes the letter by referencing the failed Africa mission, which collapsed due to political activism. His reference to being 'cold politically' appears to have two motives. Firstly, it offers reassurance that he recognises Fuller's rebuke of Fountain and is dealing with the situation. Secondly, it attempts to placate Fuller's potential fear that Carey himself is meddling in politics by challenging a social order, something that had been central to the French Revolution. The principle of Brahmin dominance was no different in practice to the hereditary privilege that the revolutionaries had opposed. Whilst demonstrating to Fuller the need to break what Carey termed the 'chains' of Caste, he assures him of his awareness of the need to avoid political confrontation.

Carey himself calls Caste one of the 'strongest chains with which the devil ever bound the children of men'³³⁵ and breaking this chain was, in Carey's eyes, a pivotal step to conversion as an individual. Although he may, initially, have considered a less dogmatic approach, he later observed that association with the missionaries meant losing Caste anyway, and so demanded a total rejection by the convert before baptism.³³⁶ During his Mudnabhati years Carey experienced the distressing death of his son Peter.³³⁷ The trauma of this event has been suggested as one of the factors in the increasing mental problems experienced by his wife Dorothy. If the death itself were not painful enough, Carey found it almost impossible to find natives willing to take part in the funeral service. Through some form of coercion he was able to convince some low Caste Muslim men to act as pall-bearers. This resulted in their removal from the village society

³³⁵ W. Carey, *Journal* 4.7.1794, in E. Carey, *Memoir*

³³⁶ BMS MSS Carey to John Sutcliff 29.12.1800

³³⁷ BMS MSS Carey to John Sutcliff, 22.11.1796

by their chief. Carey was forced to resort to threats of British judicial authority to facilitate their re-entry into village life.

This narrative is interesting as it illustrates Carey's willingness to resort to imperial style dominance to enforce his own personal agenda. Whilst the Stanley-Porter revision³³⁸ is a generally accurate portrayal of the relationship between missionaries and imperial rule, there appears to be some evidence that missionaries in general and Carey specifically were able to act with strong imperialist/colonialist tendencies in certain situations. This passage demonstrates the reliance on western power and the willingness to use it enforce western will against the religious conscience of those he engaged with. This Stanley-Porter line offers a fruitful assessment of Carey's attitude toward British rule in India and I would generally agree by assessing that Carey was rarely overtly imperialistic. If he did further the systems of rule already in place it was more covertly and probably accidental. This does not necessarily suggest that he was not perceived to be imperialistic by those he encountered but that his intentions and motivations, as they demonstrate his aim of the Christianisation and Civilisation of India, were not imperialistic. The contrast between the above narrative and his general practice is demonstrative of this fact.

The above passages demonstrate Carey's developing theory of Caste but his praxis, at least as it regards converts, is only accessible to us post-1800 when Carey was joined in India by Joshua Marshman and William Ward, and moved the mission to Serampore. It is here that he made his first convert and here we can witness this opposition to Caste in praxis amongst converts. It is apparent that the Serampore Trio came to see Caste as decidedly negative. Ward named it the greatest obstacle to missionary work.³³⁹ The primary reason for this reaction may be that Caste prevented or discouraged close association with the missionaries. This would have created a distinct problem for a missionary

³³⁸ Ian Copeland, *Christianity as an arm of Empire* makes reference to this historical revision that has reconsidered the links between Missionaries and the British Empire. Brian Stanley and Andrew Porter have challenged the assumption that all missionaries were imperialist by nature.

³³⁹ William Ward, *Farewell Letters*, 118

enterprise built on an early praxis of building cross-cultural relationships and living in community with native people.

The negative attitude of the missionaries toward the system is perhaps never more clear than in William Ward's rejoicing over the first Hindu convert Krishna Pal. Ward declared 'the chain of Caste is broken and (none) shall remake it'.³⁴⁰ However the missionaries believed that had recorded a more decisive 'victory' over Caste through the conversion of the first Brahman and the influence of the Serampore Trio can be seen in the marriage of the daughter of Krishna Pal to a Brahmin.³⁴¹

The first convert of the Kayast, or writer Caste, which ranks immediately after that of the Brahmins, was Petumber Sing, baptized at Serampore on the first Sunday in 1802; the first Brahmin convert, the amiable and intelligent Krishnuprisad, who, before his baptism trampled on his poita, or sacred thread, to indicate his rejection of Hinduism and Caste.³⁴² This trampling of the Poita, and subsequent marriage to a person of lower social rank, can be seen as a direct attack on Caste from a convert formally placed at its very centre and is somewhat akin to Marquis De Lafayette giving up his title and embracing social equality. It wasn't enough for Carey and his fellow missionaries, that converts simply rejected Caste; they wanted this rejection to be seen by those outside of the mission. Inter-marriage was encouraged for two principal reasons. Firstly it created equality within the mission; secondly it did public damage to the Caste system outside of the mission.

The Caste System that Carey observed and encountered can be seen as both similar and dissimilar to the class system he encountered in England. Movement within the orders of society of British society was possible but there remained an impregnable fortress. This was visible in political circles, which, whilst recognising the powers of the commons, still maintained a distinction between commoners and nobility. Carey would experience the strength of the established social structure in a personal way in 1808 when Sydney Smith, the well

³⁴⁰ Stephen Neill, *A History of Christianity in India, 1707 – 1858*, 198

³⁴¹ *Ibid*

³⁴² William Carey, *The Serampore Letters*, 18

renowned political commentator, referred to the missionaries in India as a 'little detachment of maniacs'.³⁴³ Smith commented on the low class and poor education of the majority of missionaries in India and other colonies. This direct attack coincided with Carey's receiving of an honorary doctorate from Brown University, and came seven years after his initial employment by Fort William College. In many ways Carey had experienced the rigidity of something like a Caste System himself. In spite of notable persons coming to his defence, Carey was assumed by many to fit Smith's caricature simply because he was of a subaltern status by birth.

The missionaries' understanding and response to the Caste System may well have been prompted further by the persecution they had received due to the Test and Corporation Acts. Whilst the 1698 Act of Toleration had prevented the direct persecution of dissenters there is no doubt dissenters still held a second-class position. Unable to apply for positions in Government or at educational institutions, as a group they smarted under the oppression and regularly appealed to the government for a full repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts. Carey continued to experience this principle in Serampore. The offer of a teaching position at the new Fort William College, created to be the Oxford of the East, was originally intended to be a professorship. Following the revelation of Carey's Dissenting position this became a Tutor's position with a salary of 500 rupees instead of 1000.³⁴⁴ The oppression, experienced as a result of religious choice, perhaps gives further insight into the thinking that led to such intolerance of Caste. Given the lack of distinction between social culture and religious culture in indigenous thought Caste cannot be strictly defined as belonging to one or the other. Essentially Caste system prevented any bettering of oneself within society, a familiar experience to dissenters in 18th century England.

Carey's street preaching was often a direct attack upon Caste and the Brahmin position within it. The criticism of Lata Mani toward Baptist missionaries, particularly Carey, which we expounded upon in the previous two chapters, is

³⁴³ Sydney Smith, *Edinburgh Review* 12, (April 1808) 172

³⁴⁴ George Smith, *Life of William Carey*, 158

once again relevant here. Missionary understanding of Indian religions led to the assumption that they followed a similar pattern to post-Reformation western Christianity and therefore placed supreme authority on the revelation of a scriptural text. Whilst we have observed some accuracy in Mani's assessment this assessment fails to take into account the missionaries motivations for their diatribes.

As with *Sati* the attempt to discredit the basis for Caste was not simply to discredit the religion but to undermine the practice. It is legitimate to observe the Baptist attitude to Caste as a response to the social aspects of the system regardless of any religious implication. Whilst Indian culture did not provide a comfortable distinction between religious and secular, Caste did have a definite control of the social distinctions and classes in India. In this respect Carey's response can be seen to draw influence from Tom Paine's assessment of the French Revolution and its republican ideology as much, if not more, than from Evangelical theology.

Geoffrey Oddie recognises the influence of the 18th century context on Carey and Ward. Observing their 'enthusiasm for the rights and freedom of the individual, the sympathy for the anti-slavery and Republican movements and in keeping with these a deep seated hatred of despotism and "priest-craft" where ever it was found'.³⁴⁵ In using the language of priest-craft Oddie is using the language of Paine. Paine's two significant works of the 18th century, *Common Sense* and *Rights of Man* (published in two parts), contained assessments of the societies he observed in Britain, France and America. Paine's *Rights of Man* was built around a defense of the French Revolution and was a response to the rebuttal of the revolution from British politician Edmund Burke that was examined in Chapter Two.³⁴⁶ Paine outlined the revolution's basis as supported in the *Declaration of the Rights of Man* including the right to liberty and freedom.³⁴⁷ In summary 'The French constitution says there shall be no titles. All that class of equivocal generation, which is sometimes called nobility and sometimes called aristocracy

³⁴⁵ Geoffrey Oddie, *Imagined Hinduism; British Protestant Missionary Constructions of Hinduism*, 135

³⁴⁶ Tom Paine, *The Rights of Man* (1991), iii

³⁴⁷ *Ibid*, 4

is done away and the peer is exalted as a man'.³⁴⁸ This new constitution would replace an old governmental system based on hereditary principle or priest-craft.³⁴⁹ Nigel Yates assesses that Paine's *Rights of Man* is centred round these two aspects of government. It is not taken up primarily with a defence of democracy but in 'attacking two principles of the *Ancien Régime*; Hereditary principle, underpinning monarchy and aristocracy and "priest-craft" offering a divine sanction for authority and hierarchy'.³⁵⁰ In his engaging with Indian society, it is perhaps reasonable, to suggest that Carey observed both of the above in the form of Brahminism and even that he offered a similar response to the one Paine offered some years previous. Although there are clearly some differences there are enough similarities to consider this possibility further.

Within the societies Paine encountered there is a clear distinction between hereditary principle and priest-craft, whilst these remained blurred lines within an Indian society that offered little distinction between secular and religious. Although the Caste System did reserve privilege for other Caste within its structure, the estimation of both orientalist and missionaries was one of Brahmin domination. Max Muller suggests that the Brahmin manipulation of sacred text in order to promote the practice of *Sati* was 'perhaps the most flagrant instance of what can be done by unscrupulous priest-craft'³⁵¹. It would seem fair to assess that Carey observed the negative aspects of both hereditary privilege and priest-craft combined in the Brahmin domination of Indian society.

In comparing Carey's response to that of Paine it would be a mistake to suggest that Carey was a revolutionary. There is no thought of leading a political uprising and he quite clearly laid aside whatever revolutionary hopes he had held in Britain. However, as demonstrated in Paine's work, the ideals of republicanism had always walked a fine line between revolution and regeneration and in his observation the events in France were more than a revolution, they led to regeneration.³⁵² Whilst Carey's Evangelical background may have made him uncomfortable with the idea that regeneration was the

³⁴⁸ *Ibid*, 33

³⁴⁹ *Ibid*, 25

³⁵⁰ Nigel Yates, *Religion politics and society in Britain*, 179

³⁵¹ Paul Thomas, *Indian Women Through the Ages*, 234

³⁵² *Op Cit*, 55

product of revolution, the concept of regeneration was at least an objective that he would have appreciated.

The principles behind the revolution appear to have been important to Carey as he involved himself in both the Christianisation and Civilisation of India. I have suggested in Chapter Five that his intentional building of community was originally based on the same values of equality that the French revolution founded itself on. These values led him to respond to aspects of India that violated these principles. The Caste System, which resembled the class system he had encountered in Britain, was one such aspect. As Paine had critiqued the hereditary principle and the inequality it perpetuated so did Carey. Whilst his weakened position, as a semi-legal resident under a strict colonial rule, led him to develop a more subtle response, it was, nonetheless, a response. By demanding Caste be rejected before conversion he demonstrated the equality of the Kingdom of God he had come to bring. As he engineered marital relationships across Caste he built a community free from Caste and based, at least in theory, on equality between British and Indian Christians.

The above response was rhetoric and it was most often an attack on Brahminism. Jeffery Cox recognises Carey's radical views and demonstrates how his egalitarian principles offer some explanation of his opposition to Caste.³⁵³ Carey's response to Brahminism was motivated in part by his mistaken belief that they hid the truth of their religious texts from lower Castes and that if the people had access they would see they were not rational and embrace rational Christianity. There is possibly some truth in this but it is also probable that his post-Reformation worldview forced an understanding of Catholic priesthood onto Brahmin priesthood. A significant portion of his opposition can be seen as a response to their social dominance. As he had experienced Britain as an underprivileged dissenter so he attempted to provide relief to those he observed as underprivileged in India.

³⁵³ Cox, 81

Chapter Eight

Carey, Education and Linguistics

When examining the *Enquiry* it appears inevitable that education would play a considerable part in the future missionary enterprise. Carey's assessment of India mourns their current situation as being one 'without laws, without arts, and sciences; and not exert ourselves to introduce amongst them the sentiments of men and of Christians'.³⁵⁴ Given Carey's background as a schoolteacher in Britain it is perhaps unsurprising that he should attempt to educate the children of the people within his immediate vicinity. It is also unsurprising that his school failed. During his time in England he had been a self confessed failure as a teacher, finding himself unable to maintain the necessary forcefulness.³⁵⁵

His Mudnabhati school consisted of a small number of local children to whom he began teaching written Bengali. The school failed not because of the inadequacies of the teacher but simply the poverty of the area. Nobody could afford to keep their child in a school, even a free one, once they became of an age to work. The school was simple in its devises. M. Laird observes the similarities between the school in Mudnabhati and the charity school in Carey's hometown of Paulersbury.³⁵⁶ The school focussed on the 'three R's' and the teaching of Christian scripture. Whilst there were some minor differences between the schools in light of Carey's Dissenting alignment the only major difference was that the boys in Paulersbury were Christians where as the ones in Mudnabhati were not.³⁵⁷

Free education would be a consistent praxis of missionaries in general and of Carey specifically; prior to 1793 there was very little European involvement in education in India making it a fundamentally missionary idea.³⁵⁸ As with many aspects of missionary institution building, the question of purpose and

³⁵⁴ William Carey, *Enquiry*, 95

³⁵⁵ Eustace Carey, *Memoir of William Carey*, 33

³⁵⁶ M.A. Laird, 'The Contribution of the Serampore Missionaries to Education in Bengal, 1793 – 1837', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London*, Vol. 31, No. 1. (1968), 94

³⁵⁷ *Ibid*

³⁵⁸ Steve Bishop, 'Protestant Missionary Education in British India', *Evangelical Quarterly* 69:3 (1997), 245

motivation surrounded the practice. Were the schools motivated by philanthropy, with the hope of offering a higher quality of life or were the schools the work of organisations that could never set aside that higher purpose of salvation. To a certain point the question remains a moot one. The missionaries, based on what they believed, saw Christianity as a superior quality of life. This superiority was true both for individuals and society as a whole. Of the individual it was particularly true in what the missionaries may have termed the eternal sense and of society it was true in the present/future sense. As noted previously the post-millennial theology outlined in Chapter Two, and accepted almost universally by non-conformist missionaries of the late 18th to early 19th century, was instrumental in the expectation of the gradual improvement of society worldwide. This improvement would not only be the result of people becoming Christians, and resulting expansion of Christianity, but also the work that Christians did leading to Civilisation.

Carey's early life had been testament to the value of education and he recognised the privilege he had received in free education. This early experience was probably the basis for his *Enquiry's* demand that mission should go beyond just conversion but extend to a philanthropic desire that the people being reached should be provided with 'government ... laws ... arts and sciences'.³⁵⁹ His desire to achieve these goals was pursued through the medium of education. The early missionaries pioneered the education of underprivileged native people groups and Carey's goal of providing civil government is directly relatable to this attempt. The early missionaries provided a framework that offered education to those that were otherwise uneducated. This pioneering educational system was indirectly involved in the education of Ambedkar and other national leaders.

Once the Baptist missionary enterprise moved to Serampore the missionaries began to develop a significant school network. This network was primarily the brainchild of Joshua and Hannah Marshman, two of the missionaries that had arrived in India in 1799.³⁶⁰ Both had extensive experience teaching and were far

³⁵⁹ William Carey, *Enquiry*, 95

³⁶⁰ Firoj High Sarwar, 'Christian Missionaries and Female Education in Bengal during East India Company's Rule: a Discourse between Christianised Colonial Domination versus Women Emancipation', *ISOR Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, Volume 4, Issue 1, 39

more successful in building schools than Carey had been. This network consisted of both paid and free schools and offered instruction to both Europeans and Natives. Following 1810 the schools changed to a monitorial system. Carey reports that the schools were built upon the Lancaster system of schooling, a peer led schooling system where each pupil was responsible for passing what he had learned to another student.³⁶¹ This greatly increased the school system's reach and developed education in India long term as Indians themselves were becoming involved in education.³⁶² The above change also resulted in a shift to ethical teaching rather than strictly Christian teaching.³⁶³ A letter from Carey, Marshman and Ward dated 18.3.1801 reports that one of their schools had closed, as parents feared their children would become Christians.³⁶⁴ This negative, local reaction may offer an explanation for the change of system.

The school network is relatively uninteresting in terms of our study here, other than it offers further evidence of Carey's commitment to the civilisation of India as laid out in his *Enquiry*. Whilst the school system was often overtly Evangelical it also aided the academic development of a future generation of indigenous people. This development is important as it demonstrates the missionaries' belief that Christianity was reasonable. This is at its core an enlightenment-based statement and returns us to Stanley's observation of five missionary prepositions related to the enlightenment experience. Of those views, outlined in Chapter Three, the following two are relevant here. They believed western civilisation was liberating and they carried an unshakable belief that rational knowledge was regenerative when coupled with Christian proclamation.

Carey understood that education would create an individual with the ability to examine Christianity's claims about the world and compare them rationally to the claims of his indigenous religion. The educated person would recognise the reasonable nature of the Christian doctrine and choose it intellectually over the latter. Carey expectation of thoughtful consideration followed by informed decision was challenged by the missionaries encounter with Ramohan Roy. Roy

³⁶¹ BMS MSS, *Carey to Sutcliff, 08.1811*, Box 13

³⁶² 'The Serampore Missionaries as Educationists 1794-1824', *Baptist Quarterly*, 320

³⁶³ *Ibid*

³⁶⁴ BMS MSS, *Carey, Marshman and Ward to BMS Committee, 18.3.1801*, Box 21

was a reformer who initially found Christianity attractive, however his examination led him to recognise certain aspects as reasonable but reject others as unreasonable. He maintained a deist position and actually succeeded in drawing one of the Serampore missionaries away to his position.³⁶⁵ The conversion of a progressive high profile native leader may well have broken the proverbial dam that Carey *et al* appear to have encountered. Certainly they made converts but the figures remained relatively small partly due to their demanding principle that converts rid themselves of Caste. It is possible that Roy's conversion would have inspired a considerable flow of conversions.

Serampore College

The initial plan for Serampore college took shape particularly early in Carey's missionary vision and demonstrated a remarkable foresight.³⁶⁶ Between the original conception and the fulfillment of Carey's education vision stood 23 years. The initial plan was focused on developing a training college. A Christopher Smith suggests a two faced vision for the Serampore college.³⁶⁷ Whilst it was an arts and science college in India it was presented in Britain as a training college for native missionaries. In this we can observe a similar hypothesis to the Mani-Cox hypothesis examined earlier. Missionaries are suggested to have developed dual lines of propaganda, one useful in Britain and one that engaged with native populations. Smith's suggestion follows a similar pattern. The missionaries, he claims, promoted Serampore as a training college in Britain on the basis that this would appeal to donors and supporters of mission. However its actual basis in India was more general and appealed to natives, hence it was marketed this way.

Whilst there is accuracy in Smith's statement it should not be understood as two faced in a manipulative sense. The missionaries were open about the college's dual focus. There was a distinct separation between Christian students studying

³⁶⁵ A full treatment of Roy's consideration of Christianity can be found in Cromwell Crawford, 'Raja Ram Mohan Roy's Attitude toward Christians and Christianity', *Neo Hindu Views of Christianity*, 16ff

³⁶⁶ BMS MSS, *Carey to BMS Committee* 18.3.1795, Box 13

³⁶⁷ A. Christopher Smith, 'Mythology and Missiology: a methodological approach to the pre-Victorian mission of the Serampore trio', *International Review of Mission* 83 (330) (July 1994) 451-75

divinity and other students studying arts and sciences. Students of indigenous faiths were never made to take part in Christian worship and were considered to be outside the Christian community.³⁶⁸ The *Enquiry's* regret, noted in the opening of the chapter, that Indian's lacked arts and sciences suggested that this could most easily be remedied through the spread of the gospel.³⁶⁹ It is important to note that the statement did not rule out other means of increasing knowledge. As praxis developed the Serampore College became an important statement of enlightenment and mission working together. One way of framing this would be to argue that mission developed enlightenment through its support of educational values, independent of evangelistic goals, whilst enlightenment supported mission through the missionaries belief that spreading of knowledge would lead to the eventual victory of rational Christianity over native superstition. However I would like to suggest that Serampore College's dual focus offers further evidence that enlightenment and mission were not fully defined in Carey's theology or praxis.

Serampore College was, in its origins, designed to develop native Christians able to meet two criteria. They must have a deep knowledge of Christianity both from a scriptural and from a rational point of view, but they must also be fundamentally Indian. Carey recognised that if indigenous Christians were to be successful they could not be westerners. Having experienced a distinct lack of success in his own homiletic addresses, he was convinced that the future of his missionary enterprise rested on native involvement in this area. It is for this reason that his correspondence in the period between the foundation of Serampore in 1800 and the college in 1818 makes numerous references to native preachers. Typical of this correspondence is a letter from 8.3.1809 in which he outlines his hope 'to see such as number of persons raised up in the church at Calcutta who will be fitted to preach the word to the natives with more acceptance than Europeans ever will'.³⁷⁰

³⁶⁸ Baptist Quarterly, *The Serampore Missionaries as Educationists 1794 ... 1824*, 324

³⁶⁹ William Carey, *Enquiry*, 70

³⁷⁰ BMS MSS, *Carey to John Sutcliff*, 8.3.1809, Box 13

The importance of vernacular education remained a fundamental part of Serampore College's educational policy in its foundational years; this made them distinct as a college and negates any claims that they endorsed a focus on Anglicisation. It allows the college to be favorably compared, in this respect, to Calcutta's Hindu college in terms of its endorsement of Indian culture.³⁷¹ This focus on vernacular education can be attributed to the college's primary initiative of developing educated native Christians able to contribute extensively to the mission's praxis in India. A recognition of their superior ability to convey a spoken message to their fellow natives was balanced by a recognition that they did not always understand the message in the way that Europeans, like Carey, had hoped to convey it.

Carey understood that Europeans were useful to the mission as directors. It would be hard to argue that he foresaw a time when western involvement ended, although it could be suggested that Serampore College was a step toward this. In spite of this continued western involvement Carey was deeply aware of the contribution non-western Christians made to the mission. The focus at Serampore was on producing educated converts able to disseminate that information to those that they, in turn, converted. This aspect of the missionary enterprise is closely linked to the translation work they carried out.

Reading India: Development of the written medium

In terms of contribution to eastern society Carey is perhaps best known for his considerable work in the field of translation. John Thomas had, during his previous time in India, attempted to translate the New Testament³⁷² and Carey therefore had something of a base with which to begin his first translation project, which was the translation of Christian scripture in Bengali. His experience in Mudnabhati was particularly beneficial for this work as his occupation as Indigo manufacturer involved hands on work for only 3 months of the year. In terms of volume Carey became a prolific translator. In a letter to

³⁷¹ This college was founded in 1816 by prominent Hindu families and focused on education in English and Western science. (Nag, *Serampore and its college*, 23)

³⁷² C. Chute, *John Thomas; First Missionary to Bengal*, 28

Fuller³⁷³ he reported the translation of parts of the bible into 26 languages and by the time of his death this number had risen.³⁷⁴

The India of the late 18th century had a diverse spread of languages. It is therefore impossible to consider his work in all of them here. Carey's chief work took place in Serampore, whilst Calcutta, Debharta and Mudnabhati were also important places in his Indian mission; therefore Carey's immediate interaction was with the localised language of Bengali. Carey's translation focus was undoubtedly the translation of first the New Testament and then the entire bible. The Baptist symbol of bible demonstrated in Chapter Three would naturally lead to this focus, however, there are two influencing factors, also noted in Chapter Seven, which contributed to Carey's determination to ensure the provision of bibles in indigenous languages. Firstly, there was a growing recognition amongst the missionaries that they were failing to communicate with the natives as successfully as Carey's *Enquiry* had originally suggested would be possible which led to a second factor; the perceived need to use Indian preachers where possible.

Carey had recognised the relative ease with which languages could be learned. His experiences with ancient and modern European languages had encouraged him that he might learn Indian languages just as quickly³⁷⁵ and in some respects this was a correct assessment. It had taken him only a short time to become proficient in Bengali to a level in which he could convey a message. However Carey had profoundly failed to recognise the challenge of conveying a complex message cross-culturally as opposed to sharing a message in a learned language with a fellow European. This failure should not be a surprise as he had never experienced another culture or, as far as we are aware, spent significant time with a person from another culture and whilst being aware, to some degree, of India's different religions, languages and culture he was manifestly unprepared by today's standards.

³⁷³ BMS MSS, *Carey to Andrew Fuller*, 4.8.1814

³⁷⁴ The final number of languages into which Carey translated or heavily influenced the translation of the Bible into is unknown. P.S. Daniel suggests a final number of 35 as a reasonable estimate. (P.S. Daniel, 'William Carey's Contribution to Indian Language' *Language in India*, Vol. 1:2 April 2001.)

³⁷⁵ William Carey, *Enquiry*, 74f

The missionaries were not only struggling to communicate with the clarity they had expected prior to their engagement in the missionary enterprise, more disappointingly they were failing to communicate with the clarity they had believed they were achieving in the first several years of the mission. Initially Carey had reported that he was successfully engaging the natives in conversion and the message was becoming widespread.³⁷⁶ Later evidence suggested that few natives really understood the message he was trying to convey. It was this revelation that led the missionaries to focus largely on bible translation.³⁷⁷ The high view of scripture held by Dissenting groups at large, and Baptists particularly, made the task of placing Christian scripture in the hands of natives a high priority. The text was considered direct revelation and inerrant, at least in its original forms. This meant that, in the missionaries' minds, any native reading the text would be experiencing direct contact with God. A cursory reading of Carey's journal is enough to demonstrate his negative assessment of his own spirituality.³⁷⁸ In line with many Christian leaders of his day his journal contains regular disappointment with his spiritual development and some form of written prayer that this would change. It is relatively easy to track the link between this spiritual failure and his missionary failures. Once the failure has been assessed as his (Carey's) fault it is easy to see why a focus on bible translation would take priority over extempore preaching in which the missionaries own spirituality, or lack of it, could be obstructive.

The second factor leading to bible translation was the developing intention to use primarily Indian evangelists in the missionaries' street preaching activities. This was, in part, linked to the first factor as the use of indigenous speakers potentially removed the problem of cross-cultural miscommunication. It also made a bible in the local vernacular indispensable. Whilst this recognition of the need for Indian evangelists was enhanced by the increasing frustration the Europeans were having with communicating the message this was not the only

³⁷⁶ BMS MSS, *Carey to Andrew Fuller* 30.1.1795, Box 13

³⁷⁷ BMS MSS, *Carey to John Sutcliff* 30.1.1795, Box 13

³⁷⁸ Carey's journal regularly made reference to his unspiritual state of which the following is typical. 'Still I mourn my barrenness, and the foolish wanderings of my mind. Surely I shall never be of any use amongst the heathen, I feel so very little of godliness in my own soul' Journal March 5th 1794 in E. Carey, *Memoir of William Carey D.D.*, 105

reason. The importance of native evangelists was linked closely to the proposed training college and was expressed early on as a part of Carey's vision.

Carey's expectation that European roles should ideally be limited to supervision and translation was a primary reason for the considerable attention he gave to the Bengali translation of the New Testament. Bengali was the language of the common man as opposed to Sanskrit, which was the language of priesthood. The Serampore press released five editions of the Bengali New Testament and so demonstrated Carey's commitment to both the text in particular and the language in general.³⁷⁹ It is probable that Carey recognised the symbolic nature of a religious text in the language of the common man. The struggle for religious freedom, of Dissenting groups in England, was an important aspect of Baptist worldview. The fact that this struggle was fought in the context of the Reformation with its reaction, in part, to the domination of Christian scripture by the Catholic priesthood, is also important. The observation of the Brahmin priesthood made by Max Muller has distinct similarities to the language that Thomas Paine would use of priesthood and Muller in particular recognises the potential for priest-craft to dominate through manipulation of texts.³⁸⁰ As reformers such as Luther and Tyndale had provided New Testaments in the language 'of the people' Carey sought to mirror this process in India. Whilst I would not suggest that this is his primary concern in translating the New Testament his apparent interest in the promotion of written Bengali, outside of the biblical text, suggests this may well have been a secondary goal. Jeffery Cox suggests that although Carey 'kept his pacifist and republican views to himself, his radical protestant egalitarianism shaped his ... choice of language'.³⁸¹ The use of this language was not only limited to Christian scripture.

A letter to Sutcliff³⁸² reveals an early hope of being able to translate the *Vedas*, the earliest of Hindu scriptures, into Bengali. This he hoped would enable the natives to experience their sacred texts for themselves. His ambition in this was that they would experience the superiority of the Christian revelation and be

³⁷⁹ Sushil Kumar De, *History of Bengali literature in the nineteenth century, 1800-1825*, 132

³⁸⁰ See note 336

³⁸¹ *Op Cit*, 81

³⁸² BMS MSS Carey to John Sutcliff 7.3.1802, Box 13

converted through it. Similarly Carey and Marshman worked diligently on a translation of the Ramayana, this time into English.³⁸³ This epic of early India is similar in style and size to the works of Homer. The fact that this work was collaboration between the missionaries and scholars from the Asiatic Society, and supported financially by the government college at Fort William, tells us something of its importance and also of the level of respect Carey had earned by 1806.³⁸⁴

References by Carey to the work on the Ramayana are relatively fleeting.³⁸⁵ Turner, writing a review of the part completed work in 1810 (the work as a whole was lost in the Serampore fire), notes that this collaboration between the missionaries and the Asiatic Society was attempted following a proposal by Carey and Marshman of translating Sanskrit works of the Hindus particularly 'those most illustrative of their manners, their history or their religion'.³⁸⁶ In addition to this Turner notes that the Ramayana was chosen because of 'the interesting view which it exhibits of ... the current ideas, manners and customs of the Hindus'. While a conclusion of any certainty cannot be made as to which areas of the ideas and manners of the Hindus attracted the missionaries' attention it is interesting to note the work of M.I. Duley who observes that the Ramayana has been seen as giving a positive message concerning women, who can be seen to have qualities aside from submission such as endurance and bravery.³⁸⁷ Perhaps it could be suggested that Carey observed a more positive tradition in the Ramayana than he had observed in practices such as *Sati*. His translation of the Ramayana into Bengali³⁸⁸ would then encourage the spread of the more positive traditions. This process provides additional rebuttal in our ongoing dialogue with Lata Mani and her suggestion that missionaries focused exclusively on the negative aspects of Indian/Hindu culture.

³⁸³ BMS MSS *Carey to Andrew Fuller* 18.11.1806 Box 13

³⁸⁴ BMS MSS *Carey to Andrew Fuller*, 10.12.1805, Box 13

³⁸⁵ He observes that he has begun the work in a *Letter to Fuller*, 10th Dec 1805, B.M.S. MSS. Fuller is reported to have been concerned at this work questioning whether Carey were not spending too much time on 'obscene' literature. This is perhaps testament to Carey's progressive background.

³⁸⁶ Turner, *Quarterly Review* 3, no 6, 380

³⁸⁷ M.I. Duley, *Cross Cultural Study of Women*, 139

³⁸⁸ Nag, *The Story of Serampore and its College*, 98

Bengali in the early 19th century was an archaic language. The importance attached to studying religious texts in their original language had, to a large extent made translation into modern vernacular unnecessary. Therefore Bengali existed as a 'copious and ... beautiful'³⁸⁹ language but one decidedly underdeveloped in terms of literature.³⁹⁰ Carey took on a position at Fort William College in 1802 firstly as a tutor of Bengali then as professor from 1806. Carey produced two works of note during his time at Fort William. The first is his *Kathopakathan*, a collection of household dialogues in the form of rural idioms. It is this work that led S.K. Das to place Carey as 'the pioneer of Bengali fiction to the extent that he was the first man to create fictitious characters in a prose work in Bengali'.³⁹¹ The second, *Itihasmala*, a book of simple historical folk-tales, is thought to be the first book of stories printed in the Bengali language.³⁹²

These works of Carey's have to a large extent, been ignored, particularly in the western world where he is appreciated because of his missionary work but receives little acknowledgement for his contribution to Indian language in general. Dewanji³⁹³ claims Carey is better remembered in India for his love of and devotion to Bengali literature than for his religious teaching. Nag,³⁹⁴ too, is highly complementary of the contribution made by Carey. He suggests that Carey's work transformed Bengali to such an extent that recent achievements by Bengali authors are only possible because of his work. Prof. S.K. De claims that 'to Carey belongs the credit of having raised the (Bengali) language from its debased condition of an unsettled dialect to the character of a regular and permanent form of speech, capable, as in the past, of becoming the refined and comprehensible vehicle of a great literature in the future.'³⁹⁵

The Serampore Trio are often described as pioneers. Evidence of this was given when in 1818 they started the first Bengali newspaper.³⁹⁶ Whilst the British

³⁸⁹ BMS MSS Carey to John Sutcliff, 9.8.1794, B.M.S. MSS

³⁹⁰ William Carey, *Unknown Letter*, 20.12.1796, in E. Carey, *Memoir*

³⁹¹ Cited in M. Dewanji, 36

³⁹² Dewanji, 42

³⁹³ *Ibid*, 43

³⁹⁴ K. Nag, *The Story of Serampore and its college*, 100

³⁹⁵ Cited in Nag, 97f

³⁹⁶ R. Chatterjee, 'Origin and Growth of Journalism Amongst Indians', *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 145, Part 2: India. (Sep.1929), pp. 161-168.

presence in India had made an English newspaper necessary in Calcutta for some years previous, it was not until this year that the *Samakar-Darpan* became the first indigenous newspaper to go into print. The paper's influence can be noted through the manner in which other newspapers sprang up in the following years; one such paper, the *Sumbad Koumuni*, was founded by Indian reformer Rammohun Roy, whose relationship to the Serampore missionaries was referenced in Chapter Six.³⁹⁷ This perhaps can be taken as evidence of Carey's influence on others around him. It would not be possible to argue that Carey and Roy had the same goals for India in the long term, only that their desire for India's improvement led them down common paths in the short term.

Carey's work in the Bengali language alone does not do justice to the broad spectrum of his influence. An example of this would be his pioneering work in the Marathi language. Whilst he was responsible for the initial Marathi grammar in 1806, he was also heavily involved in the earliest prose works.³⁹⁸ The first printed piece of prose was the work of the ruler of Tanjore, a version of Aesop's fables, printed with Carey's help, whilst the second Carey was responsible for himself. His *Simhazana-battisi* was another collection of folktales.³⁹⁹ Two important points can be drawn from this work. Firstly there must be an awareness of the situation in Marathi. Until 1804 the East India Company, at the time under the governorship of Richard Wellesley had been at war with the Marathi tribes, Carey's swift turnover of a grammar and part of the New Testament by 1806 demonstrates his passion not only for the spread of the gospel but also for the languages and education of India. Secondly, due consideration must be given to his decision to twice print a book of folktales. It may be thought that Carey as a translator had plenty to occupy his time translating the Christian scriptures and building appropriate grammars. His translation of Hindu works on top of this can be satisfactorily explained by his desire to understand, and have others understand, the culture better, but his folktales in Marathi and Bengali are harder to explain. It may be possible that Carey was attempting to create a new genre of literature in India (although he

³⁹⁷ *Ibid*, 161

³⁹⁸ I. Raeside, 'Early Prose Fiction in Marathi, 1828-1888', *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol 27, no 4, (Aug 1968), 793

³⁹⁹ *Ibid*

probably would not have expressed it in those terms). It does not appear that any secular literature existed in India at this time, as noted earlier religious culture dominated. Perhaps Carey here sought to create a form of literature for the people of India away from the dominance of religion. Whilst other areas may be open to accusations of missionary agendas, his work in this area would, to a large extent, be free of this. Carey left a British nation dramatically changed by Dr Johnson's dictionary. This codification of the English language was demonstrative of an enlightenment shift and, whilst not the first dictionary, it was considered a superior creation to the English dictionaries before it. Carey encountered Indian languages that were in a state of degradation and had he took the opportunity to change that.

In assessing his work with Sanskrit we must recall that, in Carey's time, it held a position very similar to that of Latin and Greek to English. It was a dead language from which much of Bengali and other vernaculars derived. However the importance of Sanskrit should not be underestimated as it was used in almost all Hindu sacred texts. In terms of Hindu thinking, the reading of Sanskrit was very important. It also gave Carey a familiarity with the Hindu works that most Hindus themselves would not have had. The importance of Carey's work on a Sanskrit Polygot dictionary must not be forgotten. This ambitious project consisted of a dictionary in Sanskrit with the equivalent word for each of the major vernaculars.⁴⁰⁰ While it was unfortunately lost in the fire of 1806 the ambition of such a work demonstrates not only his superior ability but also his connection with India's cultural history. Whilst Warren Hastings, in his position as Governor General,⁴⁰¹ was deeply involved in the revitalisation of Sanskrit, he and Carey appear to have had different goals. Hastings was a purist and appears to have promoted Sanskrit for its own beauty. To Carey Sanskrit was firstly a key to other languages. It opened doors to the local dialects and vernaculars and allowed the development of scripts in languages for which they did not exist. This allowed him to translate both Christian scripture and Indian scripture. Translation such as this enabled him to fulfill his mission aim and provide a basis for the Christianisation and Civilisation of India. Secondly, however, Sanskrit was

⁴⁰⁰ BMS MSS Carey to Prof. Bentley 8.1.1807

⁴⁰¹ M.J. Sudarsanam, *History of Indian Culture*, 16

a weapon. It allowed him to both challenge and diminish the power of the priesthood who maintained control of the populous through the inaccessibility of the Sanskrit language. Whilst Mani's suggestion that Carey misunderstood the principles on which the Hindu religion was developed must be conceded, this line of thought is irrelevant in attaching motives to Carey's action. Misguided they may have been, but Carey understood the priesthood to dominate through the medium of sacred text. He sought to break the power of the priesthood by making texts more readily available. His actions in light of this supposition suggest a motive similar to that of the reformers and revolutionaries he had received inspiration from in his British years.

Conclusions

In offering conclusions to this thesis, I find it important to begin by restating, as a foundational principle, the influence that the Evangelical developments of the mid-late 18th century had upon William Carey. His missionary enterprise was rooted in this experience. His early ministries at both Moulton and Leicester were based on the premise of Evangelicalism. His theological understanding of the redemptive message of Christ was underpinned his own personal conversion experience and he sought to pass this message, and the following experience, onto others. His experience of individual conversion had been the defining moment in his life, and his ministry's focus was based on the importance and necessity of this experience.

In agreement with Brian Stanley and David Bosch, I would suggest that his understanding was also influenced deeply by 'the enlightenment'. Bosch's statement, that the whole of the missionary enterprise emerged from the matrix of enlightenment, summarises neatly the point Brian Stanley's develops in his five general prepositions of Protestant missionaries. Particularly reflective of Carey's Evangelical understanding in England are prepositions four and five; the regenerative capacity of rational knowledge when linked to Christianity, and the belief that Christianity was primarily an individual thing. Whilst agreeing with the above I would also suggest that these prepositions were complemented and balanced by a post-millennial theology that expected a gradual improvement in the world as part of a, possibly invisible, millennial reign of Christ. This meant that whilst Christianity demanded an individual response it was not **only** an individual thing.

The foundational nature of this Evangelical theology for his ministry in Britain naturally meant that Carey's missionary enterprise, both in theory and eventually in praxis, was also based upon this foundation. As I demonstrate in Chapter Four, Carey's *Enquiry into the Obligation Upon Christians to Use Means for the Propagation of the Gospel* demanded a praxis of contact with indigenous people groups followed by building personal relationships and an immersion in vernacular languages. This was to be done with the intention of building a

community of converts. Whilst community was important it did not remove the imperative, present in the works of Edwards and Fuller, that each individual must respond to Christ in faith.

Carey's personal investigations had led to an increasing awareness of world population demographics, and particularly religious demographics as a sub category thereof. This scientific process increased his awareness that the Evangelical imperative he had experienced regarding Britain required an additional outlet outside of Britain. Carey did not understand the *Enquiry's* development of missionary theology as something new; he was fully aware that he was reacting to and building upon a theology of evangelism, if not mission, and a missionary enterprise, both past and present. He did, however, recognise a failure to commit to praxis, in light of that theology, amongst his own denomination, the wider Dissenting communities, and the protestant church within Britain. As I have attempted to demonstrate in Chapter Four, he simply put on paper what others were noticing and, through that work, instigated the British protestant missionary enterprise. In this respect Carey largely maintained the worldview of the Northamptonshire Baptist Association but, by his work, took it one step further.

As he followed his own theory into mission praxis Carey (and the missionary enterprise he founded) demonstrated commitment to four different missionary endeavours. Each of these endeavours took place in relationship to each other and somewhat overlap. These endeavours were:

- 1) Building a community of indigenous people
- 2) The campaign against *Sati* (or widow burning)
- 3) Opposition to the Caste System
- 4) Promotion of education and linguistics

The motivation behind each of these endeavours can, to some extent, be explained in relationship to Evangelical theology and its imperative, and would suggest a missionary aim of the Christianisation of India. It is this understanding of Carey, sometimes demonstrated in Evangelical-style biographies and more often within references to Carey in Evangelical missionary literature, that this

thesis reacts against. Whilst it is important that the evangelical influence is acknowledged, I would suggest that each of the endeavours had elements that are not satisfactorily explained by the Evangelical influence alone and which, I would suggest, are given a more satisfactory reading through reference to aspects of the late 18th century. These aspects are:

- 1) Republicanism
- 2) Equality
- 3) Education

As Carey's Evangelical principles were being established these aspects of the 18th century were taking shape around him and adding additional facets to his mindset.

Firstly, it appears evident that the scientific process was dramatically changing human knowledge. This change was taking place in two ways; these can be described as vertical and horizontal. The increased use of scientific theory certainly meant that human understanding of the universe was increasing rapidly and so the sum of human knowledge was increasing. However, developments such as the printing press, were transforming the way that knowledge was communicated and made it possible for this widening knowledge to be collated and shared. Partly as a result of this and partly due to the work of the Church of England and philanthropic groups education in Britain was becoming more readily available although by no means universal.

This growth in human knowledge also extended to travel. As science was revealing more about the way the world worked, so the physical world map was being filled in greater detail. James Cook's travels had inspired a generation, including Carey, and provided further evidence that foreign mission was possible. In delivering a sermon to his fellow ministers Carey expressed his belief that it was time to 'enlarge the place of your tent'. These two factors, knowledge of the world and the ability to explore it, when coupled with Fuller's development of Evangelical theology, would probably have provided sufficient impetus to Carey and it is probable that if Carey hadn't gone then somebody else would have.

That it **was** Carey affected the message taken in distinct ways. His message was a product of values he gained in Britain as he engaged with different aspects of the culture around him. These values were:

1) Republicanism

As I demonstrate in Chapter Four Carey was a republican. This conclusion is drawn from three pieces of evidence outlined in that chapter:

- i) The testimony of Andrew Fuller in letters to John Fountain
- ii) References in his *Enquiry* and the circumstances of its publication found in E. Payne's introduction to the 1961 republication of Carey's *Enquiry*
- iii) Links between Carey and other republicans demonstrated by S.P. Carey and Timothy George

Whilst all of the above offer important supporting evidence, the primary evidence is Fuller's testimony. Fuller's acknowledgement that Carey had held republican sympathies is telling because Fuller held a decidedly different view. It would be difficult to ascertain a motive for Fuller to provide false information regarding the republican sympathies of his colleague. It appears certain that Carey had developed political fire during his British years. As with many other dissenters he watched the revolution unfold with sympathy, and perhaps, hope that something similar would unfold within Britain, and that the 'glorious door', referenced in the *Enquiry*, would continue to open. It has not been my purpose to argue revolutionary intent for Carey, and my estimation is that he remained peaceful in his political intentions. My argument is centred on the need for recognition of his hope for political change, and a greater political and religious equality, whilst in Britain. My confidence in this conclusion is increased by the reference of numerous scholars, including both Jeffery Cox and A. Christopher Smith, to Carey's republican sentiments. In spite of the general acknowledgment of this value I would further suggest that little consideration has been given to how this might affect his missionary praxis in India.

2) Equality/Freedom

In addition to holding a broad sympathy for the goals of republican ideology Carey was also an abolitionist and unwavering in his support for the anti-slavery campaign. The idea of the rights of man that found its place in Rousseau and had inspired revolutions on two continents also inspired the anti-slavery campaigns. As the term rights of man became uncertain, and increasingly loaded with political implications, so the term equality became more popular.⁴⁰² The sentiment of the abolitionists and their supporters could be summarised in this principle. Whilst Carey's republicanism was covert within the sources I examined his attachment to equality and the anti-slavery campaign is quite the opposite. His support of egalitarian efforts was evident in:

- i) His references to the anti-slavery campaign in his *Enquiry*
- ii) Negative references to slavery in Particular Baptist sermons
- iii) The work of Brian Stanley

I would suggest that the incautious references to his support for the anti-slavery campaign within the *Enquiry* are probably due to the almost universal Particular Baptist support for the campaign, demonstrated in the two sermons examined by Brian Stanley. Revolution, and therefore republicanism was not only a controversial issue but also increasingly a volatile one as the pamphlet war of 1791 made it increasingly difficult for two people to disagree on the subject and remain cordial. More importantly republicanism was a controversial subject within the Northamptonshire Baptist Association itself, with J.C. Ryland and Andrew Fuller representing opposite spectrums, whilst there is no evidence that support for abolition was not fairly universal amongst Particular Baptists.

3) Education

Carey's father, in his position as a Church of England schoolmaster, provided Carey's education. In this respect Carey was privileged, as their economic condition would not necessarily have allowed for that opportunity. Having experienced this benefit he offered education to others, although the motivation

⁴⁰² R. Hole, 115, 118

was partly economic necessity. Carey was never particularly successful as an educator but it appears that he placed high value on the process. This conclusion was drawn from:

- i) The *Enquiry's* reference to the need for government, arts, and laws
- ii) Carey's reference to his own education
- iii) His development of a school in Britain

Carey evidently wanted more than converts. The *Enquiry* demands that missionaries contribute to improving the society with which they engaged through the development of government, arts and laws. This was only achievable through the medium of education. Although missionaries could campaign on social issues, a change in Indian society would be the work of Indians.

Having provided a contextualisation of Carey's time in Britain and established the list of three values above I was able to suggest a missionary aim of the Christianisation and Civilisation, I then proceeded to investigate his missionary praxis as related to the four endeavours, also listed above, and examined those endeavours in light of his values.

Carey and Community

Aside from the importance of vernacular languages, community was one aspect of Carey's praxis that was visible prior to his missionary enterprise. This was evident in his *Enquiry's* hope of a missional community. His move to Debharta allowed him to engage with this process and, through his pundit Ram Basu, he gathered a small community around him. There is little evidence that he was able to communicate his central message at this time, but the beginning of community seemed somewhat promising. Carey had revealed a deep admiration for the Moravian missionaries in his *Enquiry* and I was able to observe aspects of the Herrnhut community in Carey's Debharta experience. As Zinzendorf had drawn a purposeless group around him and provided them with community, so Carey did likewise. Whilst the Moravians already held a Christian faith it was evident that Zinzendorf's leadership and teaching were transformative for their community. Although Carey did not have the opportunity to provide this in Debharta it is possible this may have happened, once he became more proficient in Bengali.

The value of equality is particularly notable in his community building and in this respect his praxis is different to Zinzendorf's. The two pieces of correspondence examined make it clear that he understood himself as equal to indigenous people he shared community with and this equality was also evident in Dorothy Carey's reaction. This evident attempt to build a community based on equality suggested the possibility of another influence. Whilst the New Testament community displayed in Acts 2:42-47 could be an important influence, that community also reflects some of the autocratic elements demonstrated at Herrnhut. I could also find no evidence that this passage had been connected to missionary enterprise in 18th Century thinking.

The development of the idea of Utopia around this time appeared to offer some similarity. Whilst the development of utopian communities, or societies, had its basis in Greek philosophy, the connections between utopia, republican ideology and a post-millennial worldview were interesting. The theoretical example of Pantisocracy, conceived by its architects, Coleridge and Southey, as 'a republic of God's own making' provided a framework for a utopian community based on republican ideology. Whilst I acknowledge that this specific example was unlikely to be a direct inspiration to Carey, I would suggest that similar ideas were common. Carey's quick decision to remove himself from British society, to an almost deserted wilderness, strongly resembles the utopian ideal expressed by Coleridge, Southey *et al.*

When we couple the above thought with Carey's post-millennial theology, demonstrated by Schirrmacher, we could suggest that Carey built community because he believed society would improve. Whilst idealists like Coleridge and Southey limited numbers in order to preserve harmony, numbers did not discourage Carey. His belief in the providential nature of his enterprise generated a reliance on God as an active participant. A small community, based on equality, would grow and participate in the changing world.

As Carey's community in Debharta ended with his move to Mudnabhati, it is impossible to draw definite conclusions regarding what might have been. Community, however, remained central to his thought and praxis; his expressed

hope that Europeans and native converts should live together, as reflected in his letter (which outlined a farming community, centred around equality) to Fuller, is revealing of this centrality. He evidently understood community as essential to the survival of individual converts and the missionary enterprise in general.

I would suggest that the values of equality and of republicanism are reflected in Carey's community building and can be expressed as follows; Carey's aim was the Christianisation and Civilisation of India, his intention was to establish communities based upon the principle of principles of equality and freedom of participation, therefore he was motivated to move to Debharta, adopt the lifestyle of those around him and draw them into a community of equals. This motivation was more difficult to detect at Mudnabhati. Here, he was a manager of Indians and, therefore, more closely linked to an oppressive colonial regime than at any other time. He was unavoidably drawn into the Saidian principle that power is the basis of cultural inequality.

This could lead to the conclusion, which John and Jean Comoroff make of missionaries in general, that his multicultural commonwealth was nothing more than missionary fantasy. I would suggest that, in spite of this critique, Carey found other ways to establish a community of equality and freedom within the missionary enterprise. Following the missions move to Serampore, he, along with Joshua Marshman, William Ward, *et al*, developed the Forms of Agreement which assured rotational leadership within the community. This process began with Europeans but reflected a value that, judging by his enquiry, first missionary attempt and correspondence, he evidently thought to be foundational. He also attempted to subvert two aspects of Indian culture that did not reflect this value and these were examined in Chapters Six and Seven.

The criticism of Jeffery Cox, regarding missionaries' attitudes towards women and unordained workers did not appear to prove true in regard to Carey's missionary enterprise specifically. Cox is correct in his assessment that Carey only mentioned women once in his *Enquiry*, however Carey mentions the need for female missionaries early on in his enterprise. He quickly recognised how the secluded nature of Indian women required female missionaries. He made many

references to the Indian evangelists who worked with them. This took place some years before Serampore College was built and reflects, not only the prominent use of unordained workers but also a frequent recognition of their importance. Admittedly Carey placed Europeans in prominent supervisory roles but this appears to have as much to do with the cross-cultural communication problems as it does with anything else.

Carey and *Sati*

The anti-*Sati* campaign, which began in 1802, formally ended with the prohibition against *Sati* signed in 1829. Missionary contributions to the campaign are fairly uncontested, in spite of Catherine Weinberger's inexplicable failure to reference Carey in regards to *Sati*. Whilst their involvement has not been questioned, the same is not true of their motivations. During the course of Chapter Six I engaged directly with Lata Mani's *Contentious Traditions*, in which she critiques the motivations behind the Serampore missionaries opposition to *Sati*. Her contention is that missionaries opposed *Sati* because of religious motivations rather than philanthropic ones. In attempting to support this contention she devotes considerable time to an examination of missionary literature and correspondence and demonstrates that missionary literature for home consumption consists of an embellishment of native practices that is notable when compared to matter-of-fact references in their personal journals. Her primary focus is the work of William Ward but by extension her criticism applies to the missionaries of Serampore in general.

I observed parallels between her thesis and the one put forward by Anna Johnson and further developed by Jeffery Cox. Their work suggests a 'double vision' in which missionaries, of necessity, embellished aspects of India in literature or correspondence intended for Britain. This embellishment was intended to highlight the necessity of their mission by demonstrating the need of the 'heathen' for conversion. This theoretically increased sympathy for missionary goals and increased financial support. This embellishment, however, was complicated, however, by their need to maintain balance in their presentation. It was important that the indigenous people remain redeemable, if

they appeared unreachable then the missionary enterprise became hopeless and financial support was negatively affected. To appreciate this sensitivity we must remind ourselves that the high view of indigenous people demonstrated by Carey was a recent reaction to a low-view demonstrated by Captain James Cook *et al.*

Cox refers to the above practice as ‘defamatory synecdoche’ or the ‘defamation of the other’. Whilst Johnson and Cox suggest different motivations than the one suggested by Mani, their works demonstrate support for this reading of missionary literature. Mani’s reading can be summarised as follows: the missionaries’ motivation, as relates to *Sati*, was centred upon a destruction of Hinduism rather than a concern for the victims. It is this motivation that led them to use emotive descriptions of the practice, in literature and correspondence intended for Britain, that are not reflected in their journals.

In offering a rebuttal to Mani’s thesis, and correspondingly to the theses of Johnson and Cox, I provided an examination of the work of William Wilberforce based around Brycchan Carey’s concept of ‘sentimental rhetoric’. I was able to demonstrate the same difference in language when comparing Wilberforce’s rhetorical addresses to his journals. This use of sentimental rhetoric was evident in the work of other leading abolitionists. Wilberforce recognised a need to engage the emotions of his listeners, in order to develop support for his campaign. He, like Carey, was trying to engage the support of those who did not necessarily share his understanding of the activity against which he was campaigning.

I would suggest a comparison of the anti-slavery campaign in Britain provides the most satisfactory reading of the anti-*Sati* campaign that Carey conducted in India. Both Carey and Wilberforce were appalled by an infringement of a basic human right. These rights were deeply rooted in the philosophical developments of the late 18th century. R Hole’s appears accurate in his assessment that the terms rights of man and equality, whilst developing from the same background, came to mean different things. However, whilst both the anti-slavery and the anti-*Sati* campaigns were about equality, they were also about rights, the right to

'life and liberty'. Carey's campaign was based upon two assumptions; firstly that the victim in *Sati* rarely had a choice and secondly; that Brahmin scholars had manipulated the religious texts as they related to *Sati*.

In line with the Particular Baptist understanding of equality referenced in Chapters Three and Four, I would suggest that Carey's intention was to oppose aspects of the culture that were contrary to the values of freedom (or liberty) and equality, he was therefore motivated to encourage government opposition to *Sati* in India, to engage support in Britain and to raise public awareness of the issue. These same intentions and motivations can be observed in William Wilberforce's anti-slavery campaign.

Carey and the Caste System

Carey's opposition to the Caste System was most often demonstrated through street preaching. From the moment they entered India, street preaching became a dominant aspect of their praxis, and Carey used this missionary tool in Debharta, Mudnabhati and Serampore. This focus probably reflected their experience of Wesley and Whitfield, and may also have been generated by their comfort with a Christian experience that understood what it was to be 'outside'. Unfortunately, missionaries had failed to comprehend the difficulty of conveying their message. Whilst recognising the need to learn the language they had not recognised the difficulty of delivering a message cross-culturally.

Lata Mani's work was, again, important in recognising the implications of Carey's post-reformation identity. Carey assumed that Hinduism, as the religion he encountered most often, operated on a similar principle to reformation Christianity (and subsequently his own Particular Baptist denomination), where the primacy of a religious text was acknowledged. This was reflected in the worldview of the Northamptonshire Baptist Association, which recognised **bible** as a symbol. This confusion often meant that Carey attacked Brahmin scholars on their knowledge of Hindu scripture and, when they couldn't defend themselves, expected a change to follow. Mani appears correct in her recognition that an appeal to the 'Shastas' was considered an appeal to a way of life rather than a text. I observed a change in praxis following this recognition as the Serampore

missionaries increasingly used Indian evangelists and focussed themselves on translation work and supervisory duties. This change of praxis did not end their opposition to the Caste System and they found different opportunities to oppose it.

In examining Carey's references to the Caste System, I observed an interesting letter to Andrew Fuller. This letter contained an explanation of the Caste System and outlined his proposed response to it. However, in amongst the letter's references to Caste, Carey also commented on radical politics. Carey was evidently aware of Fuller's strong response to politically charged comments that his fellow missionary, John Fountain, had made, within letters to Britain. After addressing the Caste System, Carey then made reference to the 'Fountain situation' and then quickly returned to the need to oppose the Caste System. This 'framing' of the Caste System appears designed to address any concerns that Fuller may have of Carey meddling in political issues. Whilst Carey is careful in his remarks he does importantly endorse the view of the radically minded J.C. Ryland, that Caste may be removed by the spread of knowledge, in opposition to Fuller's view that social orders may stand the spread of Christianity.

In my research of missionary activity after 1800, I was able to observe the Serampore missionaries' response to Caste amongst converts. It is evident that they made a firm decision that conversion required a conscious breaking of Caste, probably, in part, due to recognition that any association with Europeans would be a perceived breaking of Caste anyway. This assumption was probably grounded in Carey's experience in Mudnabhati where he observed the subsequent removal from Caste of the Muslim men he had coerced into assisting at his son's funeral.

Within my research I was able to observe occasions where missionaries appear to engage in social engineering with some intention of damaging the Caste System. The marriage of converts across Caste lines was fully endorsed and even encouraged. The missionaries perceived the dancing on the poita, of a Brahmin convert, as a groundbreaking moment although it did not, perhaps, have the dramatic effect on Caste that they had hoped. I was able, however, to observe a

similarity between this moment and events in France, in which members of the aristocracy rejected their titles in favour of social equality.

Geoffery Oddie's recognition of the influence that events in France had upon the missionaries, and their subsequent opposition to priest-craft, was interesting and provided me with a link between Carey's response to Caste and the writings of Thomas Paine. Paine's work provided opposition to hereditary principle and to priest-craft, two principles that I suggest Carey was able to observe within the Caste System. Whilst I refuse to make the argument that Carey was trying to recreate a 'French Revolution' in India I would suggest that he recognised a need for regeneration. Interestingly it is regeneration that Paine understands as the goal of revolution. Where as Paine responded to hereditary principle and priest-craft as distinct, Carey observed the two combined in the oppression of Brahminism.

An additional motivation behind Carey's approach to Caste appeared to be the experience Carey had of religious persecution through the Test and Corporation Act. The effect of this Act upon dissenters in Britain was mirrored in India where Carey was denied a professorship at Fort William because of his Dissenting views. Sydney Smith's attack on Dissenting missionaries as a 'little detachment of maniacs' demonstrates the estimation with which some held Dissenting missionaries, even though Carey had been honoured both verbally, by Wilberforce and Wellesley, and academically by Brown University.

In our language of intentions and motivations, under the aim of the Christianisation and Civilisation of India, I would suggest that Carey's intention was to offer a community in which each person was recognised as equal, free from the social and religious persecution he had observed in the domination of hereditary principle and priest-craft. He was therefore motivated to oppose and attack the Caste System and Brahminism, both verbally and through social engineering.

Carey and Education

It was evident from the *Enquiry* that education would play an important part in Carey's missionary enterprise. This view was supported by his attempt to

provide schooling in Britain and by his own pursuit of education. Whilst Carey's initial attempts to provide education were a failure, the arrival of Joshua and Hannah Marshman provided the expertise needed to establish a more successful school system. It appears that this system was never entirely free from suspicion and this is reflected in the change to an ethical basis, from a specifically Christian basis, in 1810. This suggested that missionaries were able to recognise the value of education in India and, potentially, able to sacrifice immediate Evangelical goals in order to continue its provision. I observed that this would appear to connect with the third and fourth of Stanley's five prepositions. Carey and his colleagues believed that as western civilisation (preposition three) and rational knowledge (preposition four) spread, then liberation and regeneration would follow.

The early reference to a training college, which I observed in Carey's correspondence, demonstrates how central to his overall vision this concept was. As A. Christopher Smith observed, this college had two elements. One was to train native evangelists and the other was to educate in arts and sciences. As observed in Chapter Seven, the development of Indian evangelists became essential following the missionaries' recognition of their own failure to communicate cross-culturally. The college's firm commitment to vernacular languages was important as it recognised the need to develop Indian evangelists who were fundamentally non-western. This commitment to vernacular languages was also evident in my examination of Carey's translation work. Whilst the centrality of scripture, demonstrated by Particular Baptists in Britain, made this an expected goal, its importance was increased by the development of the role of European missionaries following the changes made in light of the above communication problems.

I was able to demonstrate a unique commitment to Bengali within Carey's additional work in the field of translation and linguistics. His attempt to translate the Ramayana into Bengali was interesting as it suggested a desire to ensure that indigenous people received their own sacred texts in their vernacular language. I suggested two possible motivations. Firstly, it is possible that Carey's misunderstanding of Hinduism (as observed by Mani) led to an assumption that

reading their texts would lead to an embrace of rational Christianity over irrational Hinduism. This theory struggles against the observation that the Ramayana presented the most positive aspects of Hinduism.

Secondly, it is possible that Carey recognised, in the absence of vernacular religious texts, the domination of the Brahmin priests. This would make a translation of Sanskrit texts into vernacular language primarily a subversive action. This action is somewhat similar to that of Martin Luther, in his recognition of the importance of vernacular language, but more importantly it is the translation of non-Christian literature, and this offered an additional link to Thomas Paine's reaction to priest-craft. The focus Carey placed on the translation/creation of non-religious texts was also an important observation as it was hard to assign a religious motive to this process. It seems evident that he had distinct interest in promoting the vernacular languages of India.

The overall focus, on education and linguistics, emphasise two important aspects of Carey's missionary intentions and motivations. As well as falling in line with Stanley's assessment of missionary preposition that Christianity was rational, and would spread through rational knowledge as observed previously, it also demonstrates a desire for educated converts rather than 'rice-Christians' motivated by material goods. The missionaries demanding conversion standards, particularly in requiring a rejection of the Caste System, further support this conclusion.

In our language of intentions and motivations, under an aim of the Christianisation and Civilisation of India, I would suggest the following: Carey's intentions were to make educated converts, disseminate rational knowledge through education, and to promote a community of equality and freedom by subverting Brahminism. He was therefore motivated to create a college at Serampore, to translate Indian literature into Bengali, to create works in Bengali and to promote the education of children. All of this was informed by his recognition that Christianity was reasonable and that rational knowledge, when tied to Christian proclamation, led to regeneration.

Summary of Conclusions

The above intentions and motivations listed above led me to draw the following conclusions regarding Carey's missionary enterprise. Whilst each of the endeavours we examined could to some extent be explained by Carey's Evangelical imperative, there were aspects of each that suggested another reading. When we investigated the four endeavours in respect of Carey's values of Community, equality, religious and social liberty and education a much more satisfactory reading usually appeared and these values were evidently all important to his mission praxis.

Community was central to everything, from the beginning he attempted to create community with people around him. However this community was always shaped by equality, in theory if not in practice. He made a distinct attempt to live in equality with the people he ministered to. Whilst inevitably being drawn into the Saidian observation that power creates inequality he attempted to avoid this even when it wasn't possible.

As these communities were created he attempted to ensure that those around him enjoyed liberty, whether this was liberty as concerned the Caste System or liberty in the face of *Sati*. In both of these he observed the oppression of the Brahmin who attempted to maintain religious and social privilege through this oppression. His emphasis on equality and freedom led to a passionate opposition to Caste and to *Sati*. In them he recognised the toxic effect of Brahminism, which he opposed with as much passion as Wilberforce opposed the slave trade.

Converts were not enough for Carey. His belief that Christianity was rational demanded the promotion of education and also high standards of conversion. Carey's attempt at Christian community demanded converts who were educated, free, 'citizens' who could partake in a 'multicultural Christian commonwealth' or republic. As S.P. Carey observed it was an attempt at Rousseau made practical. However as John and Jean Comaroff observe this was largely 'a missionary fantasy'.

Carey deserves credit for his distinctly 'enlightened' vision. He dreamed of a community that provided education, freedom and participation. In his mind it

appears best described as a 'Christian republic of God's own making'. It was a vision entirely too perfect to exist in a country, under the rule of an impressive colonial regime determined to exploit their 'hosts', in the name of national interest. Carey could never fully free himself from this system, in spite of his best efforts. His Christian republic on the Hooghly never existed, except possibly in his aim, intentions and motivations.

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